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*Edited by*  
J. W. McCARTY and C. B. SCHEDVIN

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G. C. BOLTON

## THE HOLLOW CONQUEROR: FLAX AND THE FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

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The conventional wisdom about our origins is plain and unglamorous; Botany Bay was chosen first and foremost as a dumping-ground for convicts.<sup>1</sup> We should have been less positive. A few months ago Geoffrey Blainey in *The Tyranny of Distance* put up a whole series of original hypotheses to challenge existing assumptions about Australian history, including a new interpretation of the reasons for the settlement of New South Wales.<sup>2</sup> Since *The Tyranny of Distance* has enjoyed a wide circulation, and is currently to be prescribed for a number of school and university courses, its conclusions may become widely accepted among readers of Australian history. My concern in this article is to test one hypothesis which, on first reading, I found hard to swallow: Mr Blainey's view of the reasons for the colonization of New South Wales.

Baldly stated, Mr Blainey's view of the matter is this:

1. Conventional historians say that the main reason for settling Australia was the disposal of convicts. This is puzzling because distance made Australia a costly penitentiary. If convicts were the main motive, there were many likely sites for a prison colony nearer to Great Britain.
2. Therefore Australia must have been settled in 1788 for some other motive, not convict transportation. Mr K. M. Dallas in 1952 went some way to offering a satisfactory explanation by pointing out the importance of New South Wales in Britain's sea strategy, particularly as a means to commanding Pacific trade routes.
3. Aside from its uses as a naval base, New South Wales was also needed by Britain as a source of raw materials. Lord Sydney's memorandum of August 1786 recommending the settlement of New South Wales mentioned the country's potential for flax and timber.

<sup>1</sup> A. G. L. Shaw, *Convicts and the Colonies*, Oxford 1966, p 49; E. O'Brien, *The Foundation of Australia, 1786-1800*, 2nd ed, Sydney 1950, part II, ch 1; C. M. H. Clark, *A History of Australia*, Vol I, Melbourne 1962, part II, ch 4.

<sup>2</sup> G. Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance*, ch 2, Melbourne 1966.



Conventional historians have treated this as window-dressing to make the idea of an Australian convict colony more attractive. Mr Blainey insists that these motives should be taken seriously. Flax and timber were vital naval stores. Russia, traditionally Britain's source of these materials, was drifting away from friendship at a time when her rising military strength worried many Englishmen. 'If England in 1936 had found the main oilfields of the world in the control of a potential enemy it would have been in the same insecure position which it had held in 1786.'

4. Norfolk Island, as a source of pine and flax, was crucial to the scheme as Mr Blainey propounds it. 'Norfolk Island was the plant nursery, Australia was to be the market garden and flax farm surrounded by gaol walls.' It was only after settlement that the local flax was found to be unsuitable, the Norfolk Island pine inferior and difficult of access. But the *hope* of cultivating naval stores was as important a factor in bringing about the settlement of Australia as the convict question. 'Flax was the first conqueror—a hollow conqueror—of the distance which so often shaped Australian destiny.'
5. It is true that the strategic arguments are mentioned nowhere in official or semi-official documents, and that flax and timber were not emphasized as reasons for the selection of Botany Bay. Even so, the arguments are feasible. Indeed, they are 'too obvious to be spelled out'. Historians may have overlooked them, but the statesmen of the 1780s took them for granted.

This last point seems to me one of the weakest links in the argument. It would be nice if we could always infer what was uppermost in the minds of bygone politicians from what they left unwritten and unsaid. It would explain why neither Lord Hawkesbury nor William Eden, Pitt's two foremost experts on commercial matters in 1786, make any reference in their correspondence to flax and timber as motives for the colonization of New South Wales; instead, Eden at any rate viewed New South Wales solely as a rather quaint convict colony.<sup>3</sup> But I doubt if the argument *ex silentia* will do, particularly with Pitt's colleagues, who were as a rule so fluent on paper. We must concentrate on the available manuscript evidence, especially on the period between June 1786, when the Cabinet was still considering and dismissing West Africa, Canada, and the West Indies as possible convict colonies, and 18 August 1786, the date of Lord Sydney's memorandum recommending Botany Bay.<sup>4</sup>

There is no doubt that Britain in 1786 required a considerable import of flax, hemp, and naval timber. Mr Blainey says that 'in the 1780's England spent about £500,000 a year on imported flax, mostly from

<sup>3</sup> Eden to Pitt, 4 Jan 1787. Add. MSS 34423, f. 217.

<sup>4</sup> M. Clark, 'The choice of Botany Bay', *Historical Studies*, 9, 1960, p 227.

St. Petersburg in Russia.' (p 28.) Presumably this figure includes both flax and hemp. Between 1772 and 1791 the average annual quantity of rough flax imported into England and Wales was 132,000 cwt. valued at between £230,000 and £240,000, and of hemp, 372,000 cwt. valued at between £310,000 and £320,000.<sup>5</sup> The average import of ships' masts was valued at £64,000, but this included the heavy demand of the war years, 1779-83, when the figure rose as high as £165,000 in 1783. Between them these items accounted for no more than 5 per cent of England's total imports, though their strategic importance doubtless outweighed their cash value. A closer examination of hemp and flax imports suggests that years when the import of rough flax were high tended to be years of low hemp import, and vice versa; thus the war years 1781-2 saw a peak in hemp imports, but apparently a low demand for rough flax. In 1785, on the other hand, hemp imports were below average, but—and this may be of some significance—imports of rough flax touched an unprecedented peak: 193,307 cwt. valued at £338,287. If this indicated a growing demand—and it probably did, although imports did not pass the 1785 peak until the war of 1793—it would have provided a sufficient incentive for Britain's interest in developing new sources of flax. As Blainey points out, the Board of Trade were certainly concerned enough to try encouraging flax-growing in Canada. But were they concerned enough to urge the foundation of an entirely new flax-growing colony in the Antipodes?

The Baltic countries, and especially Russia, were the major suppliers of British hemp and flax. It is a central point of Blainey's hypothesis that in 1786 this source of supply was seriously threatened. This is, however, doubtful. It can be argued perhaps that Britain's reliance was rudely shaken by the formation in 1780 of the Armed Neutrality of the North, a heterogeneous combination of neutral powers leagued together over maritime rights during the American Revolution.<sup>6</sup> But M. S. Anderson, the best recent authority, believes that these events 'did not destroy overnight the idea that Russia was the natural ally of Great Britain. On the contrary, conservatism and intellectual inertia

<sup>5</sup> These and all import figures used later in this paragraph are taken from E. B. Schumpeter, *English Overseas Trade Statistics, 1697-1808*, Oxford 1960, especially Table XVII.

<sup>6</sup> Mr L. R. Marchant of the Department of History, University of Western Australia, who has very helpfully discussed this article with me, points out that in any case the Armed Neutrality of 1780 did not constitute a threat to Russia's trade with Britain. It was an assertion by Russia, Sweden, and Denmark of their determination to uphold the right of neutrals to resist search by the British Navy; it did not imply a threat to cease trading with Britain. An Anglo-Danish convention of July 1780 assured the passage of Baltic hemp and timber; indeed it is probable that Denmark and Norway laid the foundations of their large modern merchant marine by trading as neutrals in the 1780-3 war. It was in the interest of all parties to keep the Baltic open. See also I. de Madariaga, *Britain, Russia and the Armed Neutrality of 1780*, London 1962.



prolonged its existence until at least the end of the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>7</sup> There are plenty of indications that British statesmen hoped for Russian friendship, and showed in courting that friendship, not the vigilant concern for sea strategy which one might have expected, but a desperate levity. Lord North in 1781 was prepared to buy Russian support with the promise of Minorca, commanding the western Mediterranean. Richard Oswald, later a delegate to the Anglo-American peace conference, proposed an Anglo-Russian alliance to be consolidated by a joint attack on the Pacific coast of Latin America, to be followed if successful by Russian occupation. (What interesting implications for modern strategy if this had happened . . .) Lord Carmarthen, from December 1783 Pitt's Foreign Secretary, hoped to found his foreign policy on a Russian alliance, and continued in that hope at least until 1786.<sup>8</sup> Of course, Anglo-Russian relations deteriorated after Russia went to war with Turkey in 1787, and reached a trough during the Oczakow crisis of 1791. But that was *after* the decision had been taken to send a convict fleet to New South Wales.

Diplomatically, then, 1786 was by no stretch of the imagination a crisis year in Anglo-Russian relations. Commercially, in some ways it was, because it marked the expiry of a commercial treaty which had operated since 1766.<sup>9</sup> At the best of times the renewal of a commercial treaty could be expected to produce some shrewd bargaining, and these were not the best of times since the French were known to be trying to negotiate their own treaty with Russia. But it is very doubtful whether the trade in flax and hemp was affected by the commercial treaty. This was concerned mainly with the rights of merchants trading in each country. It gave each country most-favoured-nation rights in the commerce of the other, secured various legal privileges for British merchants resident in Russia, and favoured British woollens with a lower import duty than those from any other country trading with Russia. It had not been thought necessary to secure the flax and hemp trade by any special arrangements, as well over half Russia's export income came from trade with Britain, and unless and until alternative customers were found—which, even allowing for the current build-up of French shipping, seemed rather unlikely—it would have been foolish for Russia to injure this trade. The British likewise were unconcerned about their dependence on Russia for these raw materials; at any rate, an official memorandum of 1786 advising a renewal of the treaty suggests some complacency:

<sup>7</sup> M. S. Anderson, *Britain's Discovery of Russia 1553-1815*, London 1958, ch 5, pp 143-6.

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, his view of Britain as Russia's 'most natural ally and consistent friend'. Carmarthen to Dorset, 27 Dec 1785: Keele University MSS, C. 168.

<sup>9</sup> J. Ehrman, *The British Government and Commercial Negotiations with Europe, 1783-1793*, Cambridge 1962, ch iv.



It is now understood, at least by Wise Men, whatever Notions have been entertained formerly, that it is of more advantage to an industrious Nation to import the Materials of Manufacture than pieces of gold and Silver; because such Articles as Hemp, Iron, Flax, &c, pass from the importers into a thousand hands, who each gain a profit . . .<sup>10</sup>

There is no mention whatever in discussions of the Russian treaty of the strategic factor in controlling new materials. Indeed, so unworried were the British authorities that their approach to the Russian negotiation was leisurely in the extreme. In February 1786 the Russians sent them the draft of a revised commercial agreement, on terms somewhat tougher than the 1766 agreement, but not impossible as a basis for negotiation. It was nine months before the British government made any reply; nine months during which the decision to settle New South Wales was taken, and when, according to Blainey's hypothesis, British statesmen might have been expected to regard the future of their Baltic commerce with the utmost anxiety.

This apparent complacency is explicable. During the parliamentary recess of 1786—that is, during July and August 1786, the months in which the decision to settle Botany Bay was taken—Pitt, Hawkesbury, and the handful of commercial experts in the British administration were working at top pressure on a number of important projects: Eden's negotiations for a trade treaty with France, the settling of a number of troublesome controversies with Spain, a project for Portugal.<sup>11</sup> They had to be clear about their priorities, and the Russian negotiation was not seen as the most pressing, especially after the Russians consented to extend the operation of the 1766 agreement from June to December 1786, and later to April 1787. Even when strong disagreement between Britain and Russia became apparent in November 1786, the British were undisturbed: 'I do not hear that our merchants are in any uneasiness about our valuable trade in that part of the world,' wrote one experienced politician.<sup>12</sup> Failing agreement, the treaty expired in April 1787, without causing any inconvenience or interruption to the Baltic trade beyond the loss of a few privileges to British merchants resident in Russia. It seems to me inconceivable that concern over the state of Anglo-Russian relations in 1786 could have led to the expensive expedient of starting a new colony at Botany Bay.

The *Annual Register* for 1786 is as good a guide on this point as any. It gives a rather unfavourable picture of Russian foreign policy. Russia is deserting her old ally Britain, to whom she owed so much for the development of her commerce, and is ganging up with Austria for

<sup>10</sup> B.T. 6/141, f. 33, quoted by Ehrman, *op cit*, p 95.

<sup>11</sup> Ehrman, *op cit*, p 23 and p 107.

<sup>12</sup> Viscount Harrington to [the earl of Huntingdon], 8 Dec 1786 (*H.M.C. Rawdon Hastings*, Vol III, 1934, p 200).

aggrandizement. Her ambitions are pointing towards the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, 'it is not, however, to be forgotten that the commerce with England is full as essential to Russia as to the former.'<sup>13</sup> An interruption to this trade would be harmful to Russia.

Commerce once lost is with great difficulty recovered, and it happens well to mankind in general, that there are but few products confined entirely to any one country. Our countrymen and old fellow-subjects the Americans would joyfully supply the place of the Russians in many respects, and those articles in which they are yet deficient might be procured in the intermediate time.<sup>14</sup>

If the *Annual Register* pinned its hopes on North America, official policy inclined more to seek alternative suppliers in Prussia and Poland. When, after the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war of 1788-92, relations between Britain and Russia really showed signs of deteriorating, there followed a spate of inconclusive negotiations between Britain and a Poland which was seeking to fortify its independence through belated constitutional reforms, and which was able to supply without difficulty almost all the materials, except iron, which were derived from Russia.<sup>15</sup> Poland already exported flax to Britain. As Britain and Russia drew near to hostilities in 1791 over the Oczakow crisis, the Polish negotiations were intensified, only to lapse after April 1791 when Britain backed down. Quite clearly, Poland was seen as the alternative source of supply if, and only if, the established contacts with Russia broke down. Instead, Britain and Russia drew together before the threat of revolutionary France, and in 1793 the two nations agreed to revive the commercial convention of 1786.

Of course Anglo-Russian relations went through further bad patches in 1801, when Czar Paul made a short-lived attempt to revive the anti-British Armed Neutrality in the Baltic, and more seriously in 1808, when Russia joined Napoleon's Continental System. By that time Poland had been swallowed up by her neighbours, with Russia gaining most of the flax-growing districts. It is worth seeing where Britain sought other sources of flax and hemp. The first idea which seems to have occurred to Lord Liverpool (the former Lord Hawkesbury, and still president of the Board of Trade) was Ireland.<sup>16</sup> Although Ireland had never grown any significant quantity of hemp during the eighteenth century, flax-growing had been encouraged because of the linen industry, and in several districts it had been found that the coarse flax suitable for naval stores flourished better than the sort wanted by the linen-spinners. Moreover, although flax was an unreliable crop, it offered

<sup>13</sup> *Annual Register*, 1786, p 143.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> For the details of these negotiations, Ehrman, *op cit*, ch v.

<sup>16</sup> Liverpool to Foster, 29 Jan 1801. Add. MSS 38311 f. 100 b.



the Irish peasant one of his few prospects of profit, at any rate in Ulster where tillers of the soil enjoyed greater security of tenure than elsewhere. Nevertheless, Ireland never became a prolific exporter of flax. Local production was absorbed by the linen industry. Ireland's commercial politicians, such as John Foster who gave every encouragement to the cultivation of local flax and flax-seed, were nevertheless unwilling that Ireland should be a mere nursery of raw materials for England. When in 1808, under the stimulus of the Continental System blockade, a concerted attempt was made to push flax-growing in Ireland, great difficulty was found in importing enough seed from North America. Irish flax exports eventually increased from 299 cwt. in 1806-7 to a peak of 69,225 cwt. in 1813-14.<sup>17</sup> This did not go half-way to meeting Britain's requirements. With Russia either hostile or partly disabled by Napoleon's 1812 campaign, Holland and Poland under French occupation and the United States at enmity, Britain was in a serious difficulty over naval supplies. This may account in part for the diminished role of the Royal Navy after Trafalgar, and for the first experiments in the use of iron cables and hawsers. But it points to 1808-14 rather than 1786 as the period in which we should expect to find Britain interested in developing overseas resources of flax and hemp.

Timber, particularly ships' masts, was the other strategic commodity which Britain drew from the Baltic in 1786; not only from Russia, but from Poland, Prussia, and Scandinavia. The supply of ships' timber and masts for the Royal Navy during the American Revolution had been a chapter of woeful incompetence, but there is no evidence which points to 1786 as a year of special crisis for Britain. To compensate for the possible uncertainty of supplies from the newly independent American colonies, the timber reserves of New Brunswick and other parts of Canada were being exploited vigorously. When in 1808-10 Russian supplies of masts were interrupted by the adoption of the Continental System, this was almost completely offset by increasing shipments from British North America.<sup>18</sup> With Canadian timber available, why was it necessary to found a new colony in order to exploit the 13 square miles of Norfolk Island, with its poor harbours and vulnerability to attack? It was not even necessary for servicing British shipping in South-East Asia, as Indian teak and the Parsee shipwrights of Bombay already provided excellent facilities. The timber of Australia and New Zealand was exploited only because ships which were already in those waters on other business—particularly supplying the convict colony of New South Wales—required back-loading for holds which otherwise must

<sup>17</sup> Year ending 5 January. See C. Gill, *The Rise of the Irish Linen Industry*, 2nd ed, Oxford 1964, pp 72-4, 224.

<sup>18</sup> R. G. Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, Harvard 1926, esp. p 396; see also chs 4, 7 and 9.

have gone empty.<sup>19</sup> But there is no evidence whatever that this was a primary motive for the settlement of Botany Bay in 1788.

We are driven back, then, to Lord Sydney's memorandum of 18 August 1786. And it is, of course, plain to see where its passage about flax and timber originated. The document under Sydney's name reads:

It may not be amiss to remark in favour of this plan that considerable advantage will arise from the cultivation of the New Zealand hemp or flax-plant in the new intended settlement, the supply of which would be of great consequence to us as a naval power, as our manufacturers are of opinion that canvas made of it would be superior in strength and beauty to any canvas made of the European material, and that a cable of the circumference of ten inches made from the former would be superior to one of eighteen inches made of the latter . . .<sup>20</sup>

One might think that the Home Office had made enquiries direct from the manufacturers, but they had not. All the arguments in favour of flax are an almost direct crib from James Matra's arguments of 1783:

I must not omit the mention of a very important article . . . I mean the New Zealand hemp or flax-plant, an object equally of curiosity and utility. By proper operations it would serve the various purposes of hemp, flax, and silk, and it is more easily manufactured than any one of them. In naval equipments it would be of the greatest importance: a cable of the circumference of ten inches would be equal in strength to one of eighteen inches made of European hemp. Our manufacturers are of opinion that canvas made of it would be superior in strength and beauty to any canvas of our own country. . .<sup>21</sup>

Does it not seem likely that some under-secretary or chief clerk in the Home Office, confronted with the task of putting together a memorandum to justify the choice of New South Wales as a convict colony, simply found Matra's proposal on the file and bodily lifted from it, without pausing to analyse or expand them, such supporting arguments as he thought might sound attractive *once the proposal had been made of siting a convict colony in New South Wales?*

Matra's assertion, untested by the Board of Trade or by any other official body, is the only source for the statement that manufacturers thought New Zealand flax superior to European. The British government under Pitt was not accustomed to frame its commercial policy on such flimsy evidence, and it seems difficult to credit that a new colony intended for flax-growing would have been founded without some enquiry about the industry by the Board of Trade. (Consider, for example, the detailed cross-examination which the Board gave the

<sup>19</sup> A point which seems to emerge clearly enough from Albion, op cit, p 364.

<sup>20</sup> HRNSW, I, ii, pp 17-19.

<sup>21</sup> HRNSW, I, ii, pp 1-6.



Enderbys and their associates about the prospects of the Southern Whaling industry.<sup>22</sup> These enquiries took place between March and May 1786, and elicited among other information the facts that the spermaceti whale was found in greatest abundance in the latitude of 31° to 36° south and that great quantities were expected to be found in the latitudes east of the Cape of Good Hope. Sydney, which is situated about 32° south, early became a port of call for whalers; and on this basis one might argue that the evidence for believing that New South Wales was founded as a whaling base is at least as good (and perhaps better) as for any other commercial motive.<sup>23</sup>

Matra's proposals were a classic example of what Mr Blainey calls armchair colonizing, but it is worth remembering that his primary motive was to find a means by which the exiled American Loyalists could re-create the world they had lost in a new homeland. The Loyalists were not to be a new band of Pilgrim Fathers, tilling the soil with their own hands and exposed to the privations of pioneering. They were to have the opportunity of prospering as gentlemen and plantation-owners; if not as planters of tobacco and sugar-cane, then as growers of whatever temperate crops New South Wales might produce. Plantations got their labour either from negro slaves, or from other forms of cheap alien labour, or from convicts. Negro slavery had a doubtful future because of English humanitarianism, and Matra seems to have thought of a Chinese proletariat. ('Sir Joseph Banks is of opinion that we may draw any number of useful inhabitants from China, agreeably to an invariable custom of the Dutch in forming or recruiting their Eastern settlements.') But when, after some months of delay while the Fox-North coalition fell and Pitt's ministry battled for survival, Matra finally secured an interview in March 1784 with the Secretary of State for the Home Office, Lord Sydney at once brought up a point which must have reflected an important departmental pre-occupation: might not a colony in New South Wales be a receptacle for transported felons?<sup>24</sup> The hint was taken, and in Sir George Young's memorandum of January 1785 the settlement of Loyalists and the transportation of convicts were linked as motives for colonizing New South Wales. We can be sure that Matra and Young were working in co-operation; they must have known each other since 1772, when Matra was British consul at Tenerife in the Canary Islands, and Young was serving on the West African station, 'where he was one of the explorers

<sup>22</sup> B.T. 5/3, pp 263-6; reproduced in V. Harlow and F. Madden, *British Colonial Developments 1774-1834, Select Documents*, Oxford 1953, pp 372-5.

<sup>23</sup> See M. Roe, 'Australia's part in "the swing to the East"', *Historical Studies*, 8, 1958, pp 202-13.

<sup>24</sup> 'Memorandum by Mr. Matra of conversation with Lord Sydney, 6 April, 1784'; quoted in the very sound pioneering article by E. C. K. Gonner, 'The Settlement of Australia', *English Historical Review*, III, 1888; p 633.

of the ancient burying-places on the Peak of Teneriffe, and brought thence the mummy now in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.'<sup>25</sup>

It is indeed a little surprising that the American Loyalists were not given the opportunity of sailing with the First Fleet. Perhaps they had become sufficiently absorbed into Canadian or British society by 1786 not to relish the idea of pioneering in the Antipodes; perhaps the initiative went out of the scheme when Matra, at the solicitation of Sir Joseph Banks, was appointed consul at Tangier in 1786. Whatever the reason—and I shall return to this later—the First Fleet was unique among British penal colonies in consisting solely of convicts and a garrison, without potential private employers of assigned labour. When, after Phillip's departure, the New South Wales Corps began assigning themselves convict labour for private enterprise, they were simply reverting to the established and traditional form of a convict colony, in which the transported felons worked to benefit the economy by developing the estates of a colonial élite. The question remains: why did the home government press ahead with the foundation of a convict colony without waiting for private settlers or investors?

Perhaps the decision was not as sudden as Mr Blainey suggests. The problem of the disposal of convicts had been before successive British governments at least since 1779, and especially since the end of the American war. If there is an apparent lack of continuity in official thought on the problem, with periods of active discussion being interspersed by months of silence, this is readily explained by the circumstances in which Pitt's ministry worked. With a very small permanent staff of clerks and a multitude of problems, even the most energetic ministers tended to concentrate on those matters which seemed most pressing and to shelve the others; and Lord Sydney, 'that old balderdash bitch' as one colleague called him, was not the most energetic of ministers. We have seen how the Russian commercial negotiation could lapse for nine months in 1786. Even at the Foreign Office diplomats were resigned to going for months without receiving the most necessary guidance from their chiefs. In certain periods of the year—the parliamentary session during winter and spring, the summer holidays—only the most urgent business had much chance of attention. I envisage some official of the Home Office—Nepean or another—using the slack period during the parliamentary recess of 1786 to catch up with outstanding business and taking up the New South Wales project not because of any sudden Baltic crisis but because the situation in the gaols was becoming more and more of a nuisance. How far can we really go past Archbishop Eris O'Brien's assertion that 'there is no shred of evidence that if the

<sup>25</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol XXI, p 1288. The most recent source for Matra and Young is the *Australian Encyclopaedia*. There is no article about either in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.



## *Flax and the Foundation of Australia*

gaols of England had not been unwontedly full, the colony would ever have been founded when it was?<sup>26</sup> With a prison population which nearly doubled between 1782 and 1787-8, the British authorities were surely under pressure to find a colony for accepting convicts. Most alternative sites had been considered and rejected. I am not convinced by Mr Blainey's arguments that a penal settlement could have been established closer to home in Canada or the West Indies. Anywhere in North America was impossible because of local opposition, as may be seen from the report of the 1785 select committee on transportation:

Mr. Nepean, being asked whether there is any plan for sending convicts to Cape Breton, or any of the British settlements in America, he said that there have been strong representations made against it from Nova Scotia—that he believes there are very few settlers in Cape Breton and that he has heard of no plan for sending them to Canada.<sup>27</sup>

Four years later, when the Irish government tried to send convicts to Newfoundland, they were not allowed to land, and W. W. Grenville (Sydney's successor at the Home Office) had to advise the Irish authorities:

No convicts have been transported from this country to any of the British colonies in America since the last peace, and all the colonies have uniformly expressed a decided resolution not to receive them.<sup>28</sup>

Of the other places which had been suggested as penal colonies, the islands of the South Atlantic, though big enough for a Napoleon, could hardly suffice for the felony of England; West Africa was unsuitable on provisioning and humanitarian grounds; and Das Voltas Bay, although its dryness and sandiness and barrenness may sound superficially like Botany Bay in the last week of January with a westerly blowing, is in fact a very much harsher environment, with an annual average rainfall of perhaps 5 inches compared to Sydney's 47 inches. None of these could seriously be preferred to New South Wales. True, the remoteness of Australia added to the expense, but it also added, as the authorities were well aware, to its deterrent effect as a place for punishment. As Lord Sydney observed in his memorandum of August 1786, it was hardly possible for persons to return without permission. Botany Bay was meant, after all, to be second only to the death penalty in terms of severity of punishment, and indeed in September 1789 Grenville as Home Secretary was caused considerable embarrassment and George III great annoyance by a party of convicts who stubbornly

<sup>26</sup> E. O'Brien, *op cit.* p 126.

<sup>27</sup> *Journals of the House of Commons*, Vol xl, p 956: quoted Harlow and Madden, *op cit.* p 432.

<sup>28</sup> W. W. Grenville to Lord Fitzgibbon, 2 Dec 1789 (*H.M.C. Fortescue MSS at Dropmore*, I, p 548). The episode is treated in O'Brien, *op cit.* pp 130-2.

refused to accept the Royal clemency when their death sentences for robbery were commuted to transportation.<sup>29</sup> The tyranny of distance was an advantage to a penal colony, however unhelpful it may have been to commercial enterprise.

Strategic arguments have also been adduced for the choice of Botany Bay. The evidence on this point is inconclusive. As Mr Blainey points out, the Admiralty, in the person of Lord Howe, was not much impressed in December 1784 by the strategic potentialities of New South Wales. By 1786-7 the situation was changing, because there was some danger that the Patriot Party in the Netherlands might make their country a French satellite, thus giving great advantages in Indonesia and South-East Asia to Britain's keenest competitors. Certainly the French, after their expulsion from India, were looking for new bases for trade and empire. In 1785 La Pérouse sailed on the expedition which would arrive at Sydney Cove just a week after Governor Phillip;<sup>30</sup> in 1787 the French gained the rights to a base in what is now Vietnam. It was against this background of Franco-Dutch activity that Francis Light founded Penang in 1786, and it might be argued that Botany Bay was another base from which Britain could check the ambitions of her rivals. The First Fleet sailed in May 1787; in September a counter-revolution in the Netherlands restored the pro-British House of Orange to power and averted for the time being the threat of French dominance over Dutch trade and colonies, and since from that time the French authorities were struggling with the onset of the Revolution, this might help to explain why there was no follow-up to the First Fleet for so long. Even if the convicts made an unpromising garrison, the ships which transported them were in themselves an augmentation of Britain's naval strength in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. But these are conjectures unsupported by evidence. Equally unsupported are Matra's assertions, revived recently by Mr K. M. Dallas, that New South Wales would provide a base for raiding the commerce of Latin America, covering the advance of British trade with China and Siberia, and providing a spring-board for the development of the Aleutians and Nootka Sound. The China tea trade centred on the Straits of Malacca and the Spice Islands. The fur trade never came near Australia. As for strategy, 'when Pitt wanted to launch a combined operation against Spain in Central America in 1790, one half of which was to come from India, it was planned to go through the Malacca Straits to the Philippines, and then on. No mention of Botany Bay despite the claims made for its potential a few years earlier by

<sup>29</sup> W. W. Grenville to George III, 20 Sept 1789 (*ibid.* I, p 520 et seq.).

<sup>30</sup> The British Ambassador to France sent the Foreign Office a report that La Pérouse's objectives included the establishment of a settlement in New Zealand for timber-getting. (Dorset to Carmarthen, 5 May 1785; Keele University MSS, C. 170.)



## *Flax and the Foundation of Australia*

Matra and Young. And when strategic studies were made on the defence of India in the late '80s, Australia was never mentioned once. . . . It was a matter of Straits of Malacca; Sumatra, or Rhio; Penang; and the Nicobars.<sup>31</sup>

The strategic motive, then, is at best inconclusive. The Admiralty may have been jolted out of Lord Howe's indifference to New South Wales by a Franco-Dutch threat in 1786-7; but if so, it was only a temporary deviation from apathy, and in any case there is simply not enough evidence. There is even less evidence to show that Pitt's ministers were at all concerned about developing reserves of flax and timber in the Antipodes or that 1786 was thought of by the British government as in any sense a year of crisis in these commodities. Convicts were the main problem for Lord Sydney, and the main reason why the Home Office promoted Botany Bay. Yet I would not wish to discount the commercial factor entirely. When Matra and Young began to extol the potential of New South Wales, and to urge its settlement by American Loyalists, they seemed to promise the British authorities an assurance which had hitherto been lacking; the prospect that if a convict colony were established in New South Wales, there would be private settlers and investors forthcoming who would not object to life in a convict settlement, and who would help to advance the new colony to economic self-sufficiency. In the event, Sir George Young's schemes came to nothing. His plan to establish a settlement on Madagascar foundered in 1785 through the jealousy of the East India Company; and there may well be a good deal in Dr Roe's theory that Whitehall soft-pedalled the commercial advantages of New South Wales in order to avoid ructions with the Company. (Contemporary newspapers were quite well aware of this difficulty.<sup>32</sup>) In April 1788 Young actually submitted to the authorities a plan for the private colonization of Norfolk Island, and was apparently surprised to learn that it was already garrisoned. So he turned his attention to Sierra Leone instead, and his interest in New South Wales ceased. He was not the last would-be Empire-builder to be enticed by the prospects of Antipodean flax and timber. As late as 1823 Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Nicolls of the Royal Marines was urging the colonization of New Zealand because of its superior flax and timber resources.<sup>33</sup> There can be no doubt that private investors over a period of many years saw New Zealand and Australia as potential competition for the Baltic suppliers. There can be equally little doubt that

<sup>31</sup> Mr John Ehrman, in a private communication, 14 Aug 1967. This summarizes a number of points in his forthcoming biography of William Pitt, of which Mr Ehrman very kindly made available some sections in manuscript to Mr Blainey and myself. This paragraph on strategy is heavily indebted to his ideas.

<sup>32</sup> *Whitehall Evening Post*, 30 Nov 1786, quoted by Gonner, *op cit*, p 630; M. Roe, *op cit*, pp 212-3.

<sup>33</sup> C.O. 201/147 ff. 181-4: in Harlow and Madden, *op cit*, pp 446-7.

British governments were slow to share this enthusiasm. Official attempts to develop flax-growing in Australia were fitful and languid, except for a brief spell of interest in 1802—just after Czar Paul's embargo—when the home government was encouraged by ex-Governor Hunter to hope great things of Hawkesbury River flax.<sup>34</sup> But Governor King was discouraging, and the episode is no more than a minor chapter in the search for a staple in New South Wales which began once the colony had been founded as a convict settlement.

How, then, to answer Mr Blainey's question: 'Why did Britain decide suddenly to send convicts to Australia?' The question must be put differently. 'Britain' decided no such thing. There was no monolithic policy-making centre at Whitehall co-ordinating all economic and colonial activities: William Pitt was not Harold Wilson. There were at least three initiatives making for the colonization of Australia in 1788. Foremost was the Home Office's long-standing problem of overcrowded gaols. Then there were the speculative commercial designs of Matra and Young which, feasible or not, at least suggested a modest but unprecedented interest by private investors in New South Wales. Finally there were the strategic purposes of the Admiralty. These three initiatives came together naturally enough during the parliamentary recess of 1786, and it is not necessary to explain the decision to settle Botany Bay by postulating a sudden threat to Baltic imports or by insisting that Pitt's ministers grounded their overseas policy on the speculative theorizing of Matra and Young. The greatest part of our evidence lays most stress on the convict problem as the main motive for settling New South Wales. Beyond this, as Dr Roe has reminded us, 'All sorts of fanciful "interpretations" are possible . . . , the historian has little alternative but to accept the *bona fides* of his documents.'<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> L. A. Gilbert, 'The Bush and the search for a staple in New South Wales, 1788-1810', *Records of the Australian Academy of Science*, Vol 1, No 1 1966, pp 6-17.

<sup>35</sup> M. Roe, *op cit*, p 213.



D. R. HAINSWORTH

THE NEW SOUTH WALES SHIPPING INTEREST  
1800-1821: A STUDY IN  
COLONIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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As an historian has recently written, 'for Australia there have always been two frontiers, an inland and an oceanic one . . .'.<sup>1</sup> In the year 1800 the more enterprising settlers of New South Wales, whether officials or emancipists, found the oceanic frontier a more hopeful source of gain than the harsh and alien terrain at their backs. Nothing could more strikingly demonstrate how British those pioneers were than that, when set down on the world's emptiest large land mass, they immediately began building boats. Nor was this at all illogical, although it was in defiance of the wishes of their home government. As we shall see, the first settlements needed ready communication if they were to survive, let alone expand. For this, vessels of varying size were most effective. They also needed to discover export staples to pay for the enormous quantity and variety of goods which the colony would need to import. As we now know, the development of the wool trade, together with the discovery of valuable minerals, was to solve the staple problem on a scale undreamed of by Sydney's first traders. However, the wool trade did not create the colony of New South Wales. Rather it was the colony, or the commercial community which developed in it, which created the wool trade. In the pioneering stage the sea had to play a major part, and for that ships were needed. My purpose is to see what can be learned about that primitive entrepreneurial community from a study of its shipping 'interest'; that is, those colonists who built or simply operated vessels ranging in size from the small craft of the Hawkesbury trade to the 185-ton three-masted *King George* which pioneered colonial sealing, whaling and the Pacific Islands trade. Also included are the foreign-built prizes and other large vessels registered abroad but owned, illegally and therefore clandestinely, by Sydney entrepreneurs.

<sup>1</sup> J. M. R. Young, 'Australia's Pacific Frontier', *Historical Studies, Australia and New Zealand*, No. 47, October 1966, p 373.

The first shipbuilders showed enterprise, courage and ingenuity. They had to invest labour and capital in yards and slipways, sail-lofts and sheds. There must always have been shortages of equipment and skilled labour. Even more formidable than building vessels from local materials in such conditions was the task of keeping them seaworthy year after year. Yet some of the larger vessels built in Sydney yards navigated the stormy waters of Bass Strait, the Tasman, the islands and fiords of New Zealand. Fiji, Tahiti, the Marquesas witnessed the arrival of Sydney-built ships, while foreign-built ships, refitted and maintained by Sydney yards, visited Canton, Calcutta, London and the North American ports. All this was achieved despite local shortages, the heavy toll of the sea, and the hostility of Whitehall, reiterating in every Governor's Instructions that colonists should not build vessels capable of navigating to ports within the East India Company's sphere of influence. The colonists devised ways to circumvent regulations designed to protect the Company's monopoly rights—in particular, the clandestine ownership of ships with an Indian or London registration. This involved the purchase of large ships, useful for moving cargoes to and from Sydney. To harvest export staples from the Pacific and Australian coastal waters and to establish a colonial carrying trade with outlying settlements, the traders needed a large number of smaller craft. During the first twenty-five years of the colony's growth we can trace the development of a shipbuilding industry which rapidly became capable of launching vessels up to 200 tons burthen. The governors' dispatches prove a muddled source for the investigator of this phenomenon. The Instructions to all governors in this period were hostile to it and some of the regulations of the early governors, and their reports to Whitehall, seem no more encouraging.<sup>2</sup> In April 1791 Governor Phillip decreed that no boat more than fourteen feet long was to be built in the settlement without a permit. In 1796 Governor Hunter, finding that several colonists were building boats for 'all comers', ordered that no boat should be built without official permission. All existing boats were to be registered. In 1797 he forbade the building of boats for private individuals, and insisted that all boats capable of navigating to the Hawkesbury settlements should be regularly inspected. Boats left with

<sup>2</sup> Governor Phillip's Instructions, dated April 1787, stated that the government wished to prevent all intercourse between the projected New South Wales settlements and the East India Company's settlements, and China and the East Indies and that Phillip was 'not on any account [to] allow craft of any sort to be built for the use of private individuals which might enable them to effect such an intercourse . . .', *Historical Records of Australia* (hereafter HRA) I, i, p 15. The same phrase occurred in Hunter's Instructions in June 1794 and in King's in February 1802, and in Macquarie's in May 1809; *op cit*, p 534; iii, p 395 and vii, p 194.



sails or oars aboard would be scuttled.<sup>3</sup> Not long after, Hunter refused to permit Norfolk Island settlers to build a boat to navigate between the island and Sydney, commenting that Sydney's 'rage for traffic' had probably spread to Norfolk.<sup>4</sup> As late as 1801 Governor King reported to Whitehall that he had bought a brig because 'she could not be purchased by any of the inhabitants consistent with His Majesty's Instructions'.<sup>5</sup> The picture presented hardly suggests the flowering of a local shipping interest. This only demonstrates that the dispatches can be a dangerous guide when read in isolation: they tell what the governor believed, or what he thought it desirable his distant superiors should believe. More boat-building and ship-owning was going on than the governors chose to admit. From the first, Governor Phillip had rewarded enterprising convicts who succeeded in supplementing the colony's meagre diet with fish. Passage boats began operating between Sydney and Parramatta very early as a result of ex-convict enterprise.<sup>6</sup> A syndicate probably headed by Thomas Fyshe Palmer owned a fishing boat, *Eliza*, which was sent to rescue survivors from the *Sydney Cove*, wrecked in Bass Strait in 1797. Although the *Eliza* was herself wrecked, she was at least large enough to be risked on such a hazardous enterprise, and capable of carrying a number of people. A larger boat replaced it which was specifically registered for the Norfolk Island trade because Hunter feared it might adventure to China if given a general register.<sup>7</sup> Once settlers began cultivating the rich bottom lands of the Hawkesbury's upper reaches a considerable passage trade developed to Sydney by way of Broken Bay. When Baudin visited Sydney in 1802 he bought a twenty-ton vessel from a colonist, to accompany the *Geographe*.<sup>8</sup> In June 1801 Lieutenant Grant, surveying the Hunter River, found a man who had been wrecked with two companions 'in a boat belonging to Underwood of Sydney'.

It was the possibilities of the sealing industry which really launched colonial shipbuilding. In March 1802 Governor Hunter, now retired to England, wrote to Under Secretary King that small vessels would be very useful to go sealing on the southern coasts, and that 'this kind of business would be better in the hands of private individuals if per-

<sup>3</sup> For Phillip, *Historical Records of New South Wales* (hereafter HRNSW) I, Part 2, 486; for Hunter, HRA I, i, p 696; and ii, p 203. The prohibition on building, if ever enforced, must have speedily become a dead letter.

<sup>4</sup> HRNSW III, p 343.

<sup>5</sup> HRA I, iii, pp 88-9.

<sup>6</sup> 'There is a fine River which runs up from Sydney to Parramatta, and Boats continually passing to and fro so that we can easily visit each other.' Mrs Samuel Marsden to a friend, 13 December 1794, Marsden Family Letters, Mitchell Library MSS 719, p 16. Former prisoners also built rowing boats which sold for five or six gallons of rum.

<sup>7</sup> HRA I, ii, p 399.

<sup>8</sup> Op cit, iii, p 697.

mitted to build vessels fit for such purpose'.<sup>9</sup> We must not be misled by this disingenuous observation. Hunter had permitted such construction before he left the colony, and was certainly aware that his successor was pursuing a policy at least as liberal. 'Some enterprising people' sought Governor King's permission to send vessels sealing in Bass Strait before Hunter's departure in 1800, and by 1802 King had confided to Lord Hobart that the 'small vessels' sealing in Bass Strait were owned by colonists.<sup>10</sup> In fact, though watchful of the East India Company's rights, King was ready to permit the building of quite large vessels, well able to navigate to Asian ports, or indeed anywhere in the world.

Who were the first builders? The most productive and among the earliest were James Underwood with his partner Henry Kable. Both men were emancipists and came with the First Fleet. Underwood was the shipbuilder, Kable the 'ships' husband'. Their activities began at least as early as 1797 when they were members of a syndicate of twelve which Hunter licensed to build a vessel whose entry in the Hawkesbury carriage trade would reduce by a third the freight charges on wheat. A ship's carpenter supervised the work and it is possible Underwood learned the trade from him. In the event the task proved too ambitious for the times, several men dropped out, and Kable and Underwood bought out the rest. The schooner *Contest*, 44 tons, was not launched until 1804, by which time Underwood had built most of his flotilla.<sup>11</sup> This consisted of the sloop *Diana*, 24 tons, launched by 1800, the schooner *Endeavour*, 31 tons, registered in 1801, and the 75-ton schooner *Governor King*, launched with some difficulty in 1803.<sup>12</sup> In the same year Underwood persuaded Governor King to allow him to build his master-work, the 185-ton fully-rigged ship *King George*, finally launched in April 1805. The partners, who had recently joined forces with Simeon Lord, were bonded for £2,000 not to navigate her north of Cape York, south of South Cape or east of 130° west. They agreed to send her to India or London for sale if Whitehall refused to approve her construction.<sup>13</sup> This was the last major undertaking of the Underwood yard, although he may have built sloops, schooners and small boats for others. Between 1805 and his departure for England in 1807

<sup>9</sup> HRNSW IV, p 729 (my italics).

<sup>10</sup> King to Banks, April 1801, HRNSW IV, p 355; King to Hobart, 9 November 1802, HRA I, iii, p 635.

<sup>11</sup> *Sydney Gazette*, 27 May 1804.

<sup>12</sup> In one return the *Governor King's* tonnage is listed as 38 tons, but Underwood rated her 75 tons in his accounts, and there are other references to the larger figure. The best source for Underwood's activities is a series of accounts preserved with other evidence and case papers relating to two law suits, *Lord v Kable & Underwood* and *Lord v Underwood*, NSW Archives 2279 and 2283.

<sup>13</sup> HRA I, v, pp 771 and 846.



he was chiefly engaged in maintaining the firm's flotilla, including their larger foreign-registered ships, and ships they chartered. Underwood, in an itemized account, valued this work at £26,000. He does not seem to have played a prominent part in the industry after his return to Sydney in April 1809.<sup>14</sup>

Another prominent builder of the period was Robert Campbell who built two brigs, the 170-ton *Perseverance* in 1807 and the 136-ton *Queen Charlotte* in 1813, as well as other small craft. Others included Andrew Thompson, Thomas Reibey (with his wife Mary and his partner Edward Wills), Isaac Nicholls, and the brothers William and James Jenkins who seem to have introduced the industry to the future Darling Harbour. John Palmer owned four sealing vessels, but may have bought them from professional builders.<sup>15</sup> It was not uncommon for small businessmen to build one or perhaps two small craft for the Hawkesbury or coastal trade. A dozen such builders can be readily identified, and probably more.<sup>16</sup> The number of craft operated with a local registration in the period 1800-21 is surprisingly large: between 110 and 120, of which only about a dozen were built outside the colony. They ranged in size from a few tons to the far-ranging vessels of more than a hundred tons which pioneered the sealing and Pacific Island trades.<sup>17</sup> However, the number of craft afloat at any one time was a smaller and fluctuating figure. The New South Wales coast took a heavy toll. Of 112 vessels positively identified, not fewer than forty-three were wrecked or foundered, and of these at least three were first pirated by escaping convicts. Some vessels were lost on their maiden voyage, others like the *King George*, Robert Campbell's *Perseverance* and Thompson's *Governor Bligh* survived to the 1820s, finishing their eventful lives as floating hulks. The cost involved in keeping wooden vessels at sea must have been considerable, but is today almost impossible

<sup>14</sup> One reason for Underwood's 'retirement' from new construction may have been the advent of Governor Bligh, whose attitude to the colony's growing commercial community was very different from King's. Bligh showed considerable hostility to colonial shipbuilding—see, for example, his anger at the construction of the Norfolk Island schooner *Endeavour* by Dr Redfern and others: Mitchell Library MSS 'Letters King, Bligh, etc', Safe 1/51, pp 53, 118.

<sup>15</sup> He bought the fifteen-ton *Fly* from ex-convict Bryan Egan.

<sup>16</sup> Among such builders would be Jonathon Griffiths, with his partners Samuel Thorley and J. Warner, James Mills, Bryan Egan, Charles Griffin, James Webb, Thomas Crump or Crumpton, George Peat of Cockle Bay and probably John Redmond, the emancipist Chief Constable of Sydney.

<sup>17</sup> It is almost impossible to make an estimate of the total tonnage of Sydney-registered vessels in the period. No tonnage is known for almost a third of them, the tonnages when given are unreliable, and some vessels are missing altogether. However, the tonnage of vessels operating between 1803 and 1821 which have been identified must have totalled well in excess of 6,000 tons. In piecing together the fragmentary records of these vessels J. S. Cumpston's *Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Sydney 1788-1825*, Canberra 1963, is invaluable.

to evaluate. Some of Underwood's and Macarthur's accounts have survived but although they usefully reveal the number of refits required, and even the type of work required, the significance of the labour costs quoted is almost impossible to determine in Sydney's barter economy.<sup>18</sup>

More revealing and more significant is the light thrown on the structure of Sydney's trading community. In an influential study of Australian economic development Brian Fitzpatrick wrote that in 1800 'ninety per cent of Australia's four hundred farmers knew that they, and most of the New South Wales population of 5,000 were economically in utter subjection to two dozen of their numbers'.<sup>19</sup> The whole tenor of the work suggests that the colony's economic life was dominated by the officers of the New South Wales Corps and a few official allies at least until the arrival of Macquarie. Study of the shipping 'interest' does nothing to confirm this, for its most striking features are the very large number of men (and even women) involved, and the diversity of their background. Indeed, like all detailed investigations of the economic life of the period, it confirms that for a very substantial number of felons, transportation provided a golden opportunity which they grasped very effectively. Of about 127 owners so far identified in the period 1800 to 1821 no less than fifty-four were emancipists or time-expired convicts, sixteen were probably ex-convicts, forty-eight came as free settlers, soldiers or officials, and nine are doubtful.<sup>20</sup> The forty-eight who never experienced convict status were not all potential 'exclusivists'. Only two seem to have been retired military officers, John Macarthur and Edward Lord (the latter a very minor member of the 'interest'), and many were either related to ex-convicts, like Joseph Underwood and James Jenkins, or married to ex-convicts like Thomas Reibey, or in partnership with ex-convicts, like Thomas Moore with Simeon Lord or Thomas Reibey with Edward Wills. The forty-eight also includes 'currency lads' born of convict parents like Henry Kable, Jnr, John Black, and John Griffiths. Nor did the 'gentlemen' of the shipping interest own all the large vessels, leaving ex-convicts to scratch a living in the Hawkesbury trade. At least fifteen emancipists engaged in Pacific or sealing ventures or both, operating eight or nine vessels of more than fifty tons and four of more than 100 tons.<sup>21</sup> (This does

<sup>18</sup> For Underwood see note 12 above; for Macarthur see Cash Book No. 1 in Macarthur Papers, Vol 7, Mitchell Library MSS A2903, and Account Book, Vol 6, loc cit, A2902.

<sup>19</sup> Brian Fitzpatrick, *British Imperialism and Australia 1783-1833*, London 1939, p 93. Dr H. V. Evatt's *Rum Rebellion*, Sydney 1938, follows a similar line.

<sup>20</sup> The chief sources consulted: the musters for 1806, 1814 and 1828, held in the Mitchell Library.

<sup>21</sup> Lord, Kable and Underwood, Thompson, Isaac Nicholls, Mary Reibey, Edward Wills, Thomas Abbott, J. Benn, William Jenkins, John Redmond, Jonathon Griffiths, Solomon Wiseman, Samuel Terry, George Crossley.



not include large ships registered abroad and clandestinely owned, in which the chief operator was an emancipist, Simeon Lord.) The shipping interest included a fair cross-section of colonial society: an officer, John Birch, paymaster of the 73rd regiment at Hobart; ex-officers; a surgeon, Thomas Jamison; officials like Thomas Moore, John Palmer and William Broughton; ex-officials like Garnham Blaxcell; former ship's officers like Thomas Reibey and Samuel Rodman Chace; former tradesmen, carpenters, shipwrights, along with a motley collection of farmers, traders, publicans, some free settled, some free-by-servitude or emancipated. The entrepreneurial society of New South Wales was richly diverse, and the shipping interest mirrors this exactly. Some owners became astonishingly affluent, like Samuel Terry, Simeon Lord and James Underwood. Others, like Edward Wills and Isaac Nicholls, achieved a more modest prosperity, while others seem to have moved from one financial crisis to another, like the Jenkins brothers. Still others, like Garnham Blaxcell, were ruined by a succession of over-ambitious enterprises.

Study of the shipping interest illuminates another aspect of the local commercial community: business associations and partnerships. While some men largely operated alone, like Andrew Thompson and Joseph Underwood, most owners were entwined in a complex net of relationships. Thus Kable and Underwood were in partnership with Simeon Lord, who quite independently was associated with Thomas Moore in the prize-ship *Pegasus*, who in turn was associated with John Harris, the former surgeon and naval officer. John Macarthur and Garnham Blaxcell formed an important partnership which drew into its orbit Surgeon Thomas Jamison and the privateersman William Campbell who was later linked with his nephew Murdoch Campbell and Edward Lord of Hobart. Robert Campbell was commercially linked with his brother-in-law John Palmer of the Commissariat, who independently had as partner William Stewart, a master mariner. The emancipist trader Thomas Abbott had as partner William Hobart Mansell who came to Sydney indentured as a clerk to Simeon Lord. The ex-Indiaman officer Thomas Reibey was partner of the emancipist Edward Wills. While of lesser significance, such detail illuminates not only a chapter in commercial history, but also the social structure of the colony. This in turn makes clearer a semi-political event like the overthrow of Bligh in 1808, and one is reminded of Simeon Lord's remark to T. W. Plummer in 1808 that 'the Trade and Mode of Government here . . . has been Nothing but Party Business for these last six years past'.<sup>22</sup> If

<sup>22</sup> Simeon Lord to T. W. Plummer, London, 24 September 1808, from the Plummer-Lord correspondence preserved with other case papers in *Plummer v Lord, Kable & Underwood*, NSW Archives 2286.

faction was at the heart of Sydney's early strife, the basis of those factions will be found in the kind of commercial associations which made up the shipping interest.

The vessels' employments were as diverse as the origins of their owners. The shipping interest began by opening trade routes with the colony's outlying settlements, and although some shipowners soon embarked on more ambitious ventures, the Hawkesbury and coastal trade remained the commonest employment. The Sydney region's poor soil drove settlers some twenty-five to thirty miles into the interior on to the rich bottom lands of the Hawkesbury. The river, which alternately blessed the area with good soil and cursed it with floods, also provided the vital transportation link with Sydney. Vessels of up to 100 tons burthen could navigate four miles upstream from the present site of Windsor.<sup>23</sup> This provided the cheap route to the coast which made commercial farming possible in a period when road transport costs were prohibitively high. Very early, then, men began operating a regular carrying trade from the upper reaches of the Hawkesbury to Sydney. Their boats were usually large open- or half-decked sloops with a crew of two or three men, but their route was reasonably safe apart from the brief but hazardous sea passage from Broken Bay to Sydney Heads. Here a number were wrecked or foundered. Of the 112 craft identified as operating from Sydney between 1803 and 1821 about twenty-five were always used in Hawkesbury voyages, while at least sixty were sometimes so employed. The vessels brought grain down-river on consignment to Sydney traders like Robert Campbell or Simeon Lord to pay for consumer goods sent on up-stream voyages.<sup>24</sup> The latter would be distributed through local agents or through such resident traders as Andrew Thompson. No doubt the majority of the owners in this river traffic were ex-convicts like Andrew Thompson, Kable and Underwood, Lord, Jonathon Griffiths and his partner Samuel Morley, Thomas Gilberthorpe, Charles Beasley, but such free settlers or officials as John Macarthur, Thomas Reibey and John Palmer were involved. Some of the lesser figures like the boatbuilder James Webb, a former employee of Thompson's, and Robert Inch who was lost with the *Charlotte* in 1808, were also free settlers.

The discovery of the Hunter River, and the wealth of coal and cedar found close to its banks, led to the establishment of the new outer settlement, Newcastle. In turn a regular coastal trade developed similar

<sup>23</sup> William Charles Wentworth, *A Statistical, Historical and Political Description . . . of New South Wales*, etc, London 1820, p 33.

<sup>24</sup> An entry in a Hawkesbury settler's journal in November 1808 reads: 'Recd from George Hall, Eleven Bushels of Storable Maize for John J. Grewey (sic?) Sydney Carriage Paid. B. Pate, *Argument Brigg* (sic)', Journal of George Hall, Mitchell Library MSS A2585.

to the Hawkesbury trade, with coal and timber replacing grain and meat. Although the records are incomplete, at least 230 consignments of coal were landed in Sydney between 1803 and 1821, amounting to several thousand tons, and at least 130 consignments of cedar, although some of this came from the stands felled at the Shoalhaven River during the Macquarie period. About forty vessels made Newcastle voyages between 1803 and 1821, not all of them regularly. The most prominent owners prior to 1810 were Lord, Kable and Underwood, Thompson, Isaac Nicholls, William Miller, all ex-convicts, together with John Macarthur, Palmer and Reibey. Simeon Lord was, in 1801, the first settler to gather a cargo of coal for export. After 1810 the trade passed into the hands of emancipists like Solomon Wiseman, Mary Reibey, and George Dowling, and such free settlers as Garnham Blaxcell, Joseph Underwood, James Webb and John Grono. The degree to which enterprise had made communication with Newcastle frequent and speedy may be judged from the fact that there were sixteen arrivals from there in 1804.<sup>25</sup> In 1811 there were thirty-four arrivals, and the fall to thirty-one in 1812 may be partly accounted for by the opening up of the Shoalhaven cedar trade during that year.<sup>26</sup> A substantial number of the voyages were on behalf of government.

Before leaving the coastal trade two other settlements should be mentioned: Norfolk Island and Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town and Port Dalrymple). Norfolk Island was distant and devoid of an anchorage. Communication with the island was spasmodic and usually carried out by government vessels, or by China-bound ships or whaling ships commissioned to do so by the governor or by such large traders as Simeon Lord.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless some half-dozen vessels, owned by Palmer, Macarthur, Reibey, Kable and Underwood and Robert Campbell helped maintain contact with the island, usually carrying consumer goods there, and receiving salt pork as a return. From the first founding of Hobart in 1803, the enterprise of the shipping interest was a valuable adjunct to the governor's colonizing activities, and from time to time he chartered local bottoms to take down supplies and personnel. After 1815 Van Diemen's Land became a valuable source of grain, kangaroo hides and potatoes, with sixty or seventy arrivals from the southern settlements before the close of 1821. In this trade the leading figures were Mary Reibey, Robert Campbell (rebuilding his shattered fortunes

<sup>25</sup> See Cumpston, *op cit.*

<sup>26</sup> There would have been thirty-two arrivals but the *Sally* foundered on a return journey. There were eleven arrivals with Shoalhaven cedar during this year.

<sup>27</sup> As when Lord got the American brig *Union* to land spirits at Norfolk I. in 1804 in defiance of Governor King's orders and with the cheerful co-operation of acting Lieut.-Governor Piper whose relations with Lord were much closer than King could have been aware of, see for example Equity Court Papers, *Lord v W. C. Wentworth and others, executors*, 1832, NSW Archives.



in a variety of enterprises), Denis McCarthy, the master mariner Joseph James and two notable Hobart residents Edward Lord and Roland Walpole Loane. In brief, the operations of the shipping interest in the coastal trade helped to bind together scattered settlements and lonely steadings into a colony with a common, integrated economic life.

Although this was both valuable and important, it did not solve the problem which chiefly interested the leading Sydney traders: the need to find a colonial staple. Prior to 1821 the sealing industry, blind alley though it proved, came closest to filling this need. The sealing industry is a study in itself.<sup>28</sup> Here it is only necessary to summarize briefly what it meant to the emerging colony and the degree to which the Sydney traders participated in it. The sealing grounds first exploited were in Bass Strait and on Kangaroo Island. The search then spread to New Zealand and Antipodes Island, and finally the rich grounds on Campbell and Macquarie Islands. The men chiefly involved before 1810 were Kable and Underwood, who were sealing as early as 1800, Simeon Lord, Robert Campbell, John Palmer, Thomas Reibey and to a lesser degree Andrew Thompson and Isaac Nicholls.<sup>29</sup> After 1810 interest in the industry declined markedly and by 1815 apart from Nicholls none of these men were involved in it. The principal Sydney sealers were then Joseph Underwood (who had several other interests), Mary Reibey, John Griffiths (son of the emancipist boatbuilder Jonathon Griffiths), Joseph James, and after 1817 Richard Jones, Edward Riley and William Walker. Lesser figures in the Macquarie period were John Grono, Edward Lord and T. W. Birch. The seal skins, seal and sea elephant oil were usually marketed in either Canton or London, but not all sealing masters sold directly to these markets. Some smaller operators preferred to sell to Robert Campbell or to passing ships, taking a smaller but probably surer profit. Men like Simeon Lord preferred to sell direct and accept the hazard. Unfortunately between 1803 and 1815 Britain, the only really profitable market, was at war. Heavy insurance premiums, the menace of privateers, the Jefferson Embargo Act of 1808 (which reduced the demand for seal wool for hats), and financial stringencies caused by Napoleon's Continental System, all severely curtailed the profits of sealing. The scanty accounts of sealing masters which have survived do not present a rosy picture. Although some of Simeon Lord's skins brought high prices, others found a depressed market and John Macarthur's interest in the *Dart* appears to have been

<sup>28</sup> See further D. R. Hainsworth, 'Exploiting the Pacific Frontier: the New South Wales Sealing Industry 1800-1821', *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol II, 1967; and 'Iron Men in Wooden Ships: The Sydney Sealers 1800-1820', *Labour History* No 13, November 1967.

<sup>29</sup> John Macarthur and Garnham Blaxcell had an interest in the British-registered sealer *Dart* but do not seem to have employed their local flotilla on sealing voyages.

a losing venture.<sup>30</sup> Moreover skins were often damaged or worm-eaten in transit—perhaps no more than half reached their market unharmed. Finally, the demand for skins, though substantial, was not insatiable. By 1808-9 there were too many skins on the London market. As for Canton, although the Hong merchants would buy skins, they would rarely pay much more for them than would cover the labour of catching and the cost of shipping. This gloomy picture shows why the sealing industry was of no permanent importance to the colony's economy,<sup>31</sup> but this does not mean sealing was of no importance to the colony's development. It helped to bridge the gap until more permanent staples could be found. Simeon Lord was able to sign bills on his London brokers on behalf of himself and his partners to a total of £102,119 between 1804 and 1809, simply on the basis of his ability to remit them skins and oil. The Sydney traders needed credit abroad. Sealing opened the door to credit in London, and indirectly in Calcutta. While too easy credit proved fatal to some traders, like John Palmer and Garnham Blaxcell, it certainly made colonial development more swift and more diverse.

It was a feature of colonial sealing that the sealing masters employed their vessels to carry their gangs to the grounds, and to remove the skins and oil, but did not station them on the grounds, as in whaling. Thus vessels like the *Governor King*, *Governor Bligh* or *King George*, although built for sealing, could find other employment while the gangs amassed a valuable catch. Lord, Kable, and Underwood exploited the Black Whales of the Derwent estuary, but whaling needed elaborate equipment and numbers of skilled men. Chiefly the sealing masters looked to the Pacific.

A noted Pacific historian has observed that the Sydney entrepreneurs turned quite naturally to the Pacific Islands as a source of profit because in the first decade of the nineteenth century those islands were far better known than the mainland of New South Wales. Governor King also favoured the opening of Pacific trade routes, because such a trade would be regarded as 'domestic' and no infringement of the East India Company's monopoly rights.<sup>32</sup> However, the main energies of the shipping interest were turned to sealing during King's governorship,

<sup>30</sup> Hainsworth, *op cit*; for Macarthur's *Dart* account see Macarthur Papers Vol 6, Mitchell Library MSS A2902.

<sup>31</sup> Another reason was reckless over-fishing which speedily depleted the grounds even as it reduced the price of skins. Between 1803 and 1809 there were at least 68 arrivals from the fishing grounds (with a gap in the records). Between 1810 and 1815 (with no gap) there were 48. Between 1816 and 1821 there were about 30. The contrast is even more marked than it seems since in the latter two periods vessels sometimes arrived empty, and the figures also include arrivals from Port Dalrymple bringing small parcels of skins, probably on freight.

<sup>32</sup> H. E. Maude, 'The Tahitian Pork Trade: 1800-1830', *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, Vol XV, No 15, December 1959, pp 55, 58-9.

and although there were a number of pork voyages to Tahiti, these were carried out by naval vessels or by English visitors like Bishop, Bass and Simpson. Civil war in Tahiti also discouraged voyages and between 1803 and 1807 only one cargo of pork was landed from Tahiti. (In 1806 Thompson's 18-ton *Hawkesbury* was chartered to carry provisions to the Tahitian mission, but the tiny craft does not appear to have returned with any cargo.) However, discouraging reports from Tahiti did not inhibit all Pacific enterprise. In April 1805 Simeon Lord's little schooner *Marcia* brought back fifteen tons of sandalwood from Fiji, and launched a boom which was to last for nearly five years.<sup>33</sup> Lord, Kable and Underwood, John Macarthur and Garnham Blaxcell, together with Thomas Jamison and William Campbell, Thomas Reibey and Robert Campbell were all involved in the brief but hectic Fijian sandalwood boom. Lord probably had the greatest individual coup. As a result of an irregular alliance with an American mariner, his share from a sandalwood venture brought him 30,000 dollars. Macarthur and his associates contrived to land a valuable cargo of Chinese goods bought with sandalwood in 1808. The rest of their sandalwood ventures were much less profitable. Men like Reibey may have preferred to sell their wood to passing vessels bound for Canton—according to some sources prices of £50 and even £70 a ton were paid by such transients. In the event, apart from a brief but profitable spasm in the Marquesas in 1815, the early Sydney sandalwood trade was over by the beginning of 1810. Nevertheless, although even more of a blind alley as a colonial staple than sealing, the lure of sandalwood had aroused Sydney's traders to the possibilities of the Pacific, and provided their captains with invaluable experience. In 1810 sandalwood might be dying but the colonial Pacific trading was just developing.

In 1807 Macarthur and Blaxcell had reopened the Tahitian pork trade with their flotilla, and Reibey and Wills followed suit in 1808. By 1810 the trade was regularly established and from then on there was an average of three shipments of pork a year from Tahiti to Sydney.<sup>34</sup> Blaxcell and Campbell, partners from 1808 or 1809, sent the *Hibernia*, *Northumberland* and *Venus* once each, the *Cyclops* twice and the *Governor Macquarie* six times. Other prominent speculators in pork were Isaac Nicholls with the brig *Endeavour* (six voyages) Mary Reibey with the *Mercury*, James Birnie with the *Queen Charlotte* (four voyages each) and Joseph Underwood with his brother's old *King George* (two voyages). Colonial bottoms navigated to the Tuamotus in a successful search for pearl and pearl shell, and bêche-de-mer

<sup>33</sup> For an account of the early Sydney sandalwood trade see D. R. Hainsworth 'In Search of a Staple: the Sydney Sandalwood Trade 1804-9', *Business Archives and History*, Vol 5, No 1, February 1965.

<sup>34</sup> Maude, *op cit*, p 65.



was sometimes collected. All in all, with varying degrees of success commercially, the Sydney traders had taken the measure of their Pacific frontier, charted its trade routes and garnered valuable experience of its peoples, all before the end of Macquarie's governorship.

This brief examination of the activities of the shipping interest must not conclude without some reference to the clandestine ownership of ships with a British or foreign registration. One of the problems which the traders faced in the early 1800s was the terrible isolation of New South Wales. From time to time American or British sealers and whalers would call, sometimes simply to refresh, sometimes with speculative cargoes. The traders must have contemplated them with longing, for they needed ships of this size to move their skins and oil and sandalwood to market. Faced with a warehouse full of skins and oil, Robert Campbell took his firm's *Lady Barlow* to England with them. The voyage was a breach of the Company's monopoly and almost cost Campbell his ship.<sup>35</sup> Simeon Lord had bought two prize-ships, in 1799 and 1800, and sent one to India with New Zealand spars and the other to Cape Town with coal. Both were sold there. A return voyage would have been illegal. The purchase of prizes, therefore, though it helped colonists to embark on maritime speculations, could not solve the problem of moving the fruits of those speculations to market.<sup>36</sup> Simeon Lord found an ingenious solution. At least as early as 1804 he had appointed the London brokers, Messrs Plummers, his British representatives. In 1806 he had Plummers buy for Lord, Kable & Underwood the ship *Sydney Cove* for £2,200. He intended that the ship should bring the firm a cargo of general merchandise, and return with seal skins and oil, and then establish a regular trade. In the event the total cost of the ship, after an expensive refit, was £7,363, and Plummers could not advance the cost of the cargo as well. As a profitable substitute they hired her to the government as a convict transport. Since Plummers held a mortgage on her, they were the registered owners. The Transport Board may have never known they were shipping convicts on a vessel owned by three ex-convicts resident in Sydney. A suspicious Governor Bligh demanded to know the real owners but Lord insisted Plummers were, and as this was *technically* correct the governor was confounded.<sup>37</sup> In 1806, Lord had purchased the snow *Commerce* to carry skins and

<sup>35</sup> For a full account of this incident see Margaret Steven, *Merchant Campbell*, Melbourne 1965, Chapter Five *passim*.

<sup>36</sup> Among prizes purchased were the following: *Hunter* (1799), *Anna Josepha* (1800), *Santa Anna* (1806), *Pegasus* (1807) all by Simeon Lord with others; *Sophia* (1804), Robert Campbell; *Elizabeth* (1806), John Macarthur, Garnham Blaxcell.

<sup>37</sup> For the purchase of the *Sydney Cove* see reference at note 22 above; for the Bligh-Lord exchange see Col. Sec. Papers, Governor's Appeal Court, *Lord v Birnie*, NSW Archives 4/6606, p 325.

oil to England, but hearing of Campbell's difficulties he abandoned this idea and used her for sealing expeditions until 1808, when he sold her with her cargo of skins and sandalwood at Macao. Meanwhile, he had bought the ship *Star* in Sydney, mortgaged her to her late owners, Alexander Birnie & Co. of London, and sent her to England with a cargo of skins which sold for more than £10,000.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to outright purchase with a mortgage Lord tried to control the movements of ships with an Indian or foreign registration by purchasing a share in them. Here he was less fortunate. In 1808 he negotiated to buy a half share in the Madras country ship *Harrington* only to see it pirated by convicts. He bought a share in the country ship *General Wellesley*, only to find that its captain was determined not to be controlled by any of his owners. He bought the prize *Santa Anna* on the understanding that Bligh would permit a return voyage to China, only to see the permit go to his rival Robert Campbell.<sup>39</sup> He also bought a share in the sealer *Brothers* (Hullets) from John Blaxland. In the Macquarie period Joseph Underwood employed a similar technique. In 1810 he sailed to Calcutta in the *Marian*, a ship he had contracted to purchase—which meant it was still registered in the name of a Calcutta firm whilst under his control. He returned in 1811 in the *Campbell Macquarie*, which he had bought but mortgaged to Alexander & Co. of Calcutta. The vessel brought him another India cargo in 1812 and was then cast away on Macquarie Island. Governor Macquarie had been disturbed by Underwood's apparent breaches of regulations but like Bligh had been confused by the legal technicality.<sup>40</sup> After 1815 the restrictions on direct colonial trading with India and Asia eased, but by ingenious and clandestine operations a number of Sydney traders had bridged the gap and had built up a valuable store of experience during a period in which all their trading with Asia and London had been against the wishes of the home government.

This account of the activities of the Sydney shipping interest has had to be sketchy and impressionistic, but it will have served its purpose if it shows first, the richness and diversity of trading operations in this period, and of the society that conducted them; and secondly, the degree to which the official records can be misleading if read in isolation and accepted too literally.

University of Adelaide

<sup>38</sup> See reference at note 22 above.

<sup>39</sup> Lord also chartered vessels, e.g., the *Honduras Packet* to London and the *Favourite* to China in 1806 and the *Aurora* and perhaps the *Boyd* in 1809-10.

<sup>40</sup> For Macquarie's investigation of the *Marion's* ownership see Col. Sec. In Letters 1810, NSW Archives 4/1723, pp 232-4, 236-8; also Register of Assignments IV Mitchell Library MSS A3610, p 106.

J. A. DOWIE

## GRASS CASTLES IN GREEN FIELDS

The budding Lucky Jims of the British universities were, probably unknown to themselves, an underprivileged class before 1966. By doing some uncharacteristically diligent research they could have found somewhere in the British Isles an undergraduate history course dealing with each of the settled continents and often, of course, parts of each as well. Except one. Being able to take courses in European, Asian, African, North American and Latin American history—with the delights of excursions into such areas as 'British trade and diplomacy in the Baltic 1697-1734', 'Burma, Siam and Britain 1826-1855', 'The Mahdia in the Sudan 1881-98' and 'The Mexican revolution 1909-1917' (not to mention 'The universities of the British Isles in the 17th century') along the way<sup>1</sup>—should have satisfied the most dedicated historical globe-trotter. Perhaps it did. But in any event the one previous deprivation has now been remedied, because an Australasian course has, from last year, been offered at the University of Kent at Canterbury. No longer do Australia and New Zealand appear solely as component parts of that greater whole, the Empire and Commonwealth. Can they stand alone? Looking back on the reaction to the first run-through of the Kent course—on Australasian economic and social history—the odds seem to be favourable.

First, the broader scene. Economic history as a subject with a recognizably distinct existence has had mixed fortune as far as the new British universities are concerned (confining the term 'new' to the 'green fields' institutions, largely of the 1960s, and excluding the recently upgraded tertiary institutions of various sorts). Keele, Lancaster and Stirling eschew the subject completely, though all offer combined degrees in economics and history. Essex offers a soupçon: one-third of the common first year course in social studies comprises 'economic, social and political history' and students taking economics in Part II have one optional paper in economic history. At York (economic and social history), Warwick (economic and political history), Sussex (economic and social history) and East Anglia (economic history) it is

<sup>1</sup> All verifiable in George Barlow and Brian Harrison eds, *History at the Universities: A Comparative and Analytical Guide to History Syllabuses at Universities in the United Kingdom*, London 1966 (and corrigenda, 1967).



possible to offer the subject as half (or slightly more) of a combined subject degree, usually with economics and history as alternatives, sometimes with sociology and politics. And at York and East Anglia it also appears specifically as one of the areas treated in the common first year course for social science students. The ultimate accolade of professorial status is given at two of the seven—Sussex (Barry Supple) and East Anglia (Roy Campbell).

Only at the eighth green field—Kent (Theo Barker)—does the subject (as economic and social history) attain full status by both professorial and course criteria. It forms one of the several subjects in the common four-term Part I for social science students; until now in company with economics, politics, sociology and statistics, but from next year with law and accounting added, in somewhat smaller proportions than the originals. And it may be taken at Part II either in combination with one of these or *alone as a single subject*. The Australasian course can therefore be chosen as one of three economic and social history papers in a combined-subject degree, as one of the six papers in a single-subject degree, or as the 'one paper from any other subject' in most other subject degrees. The other economic and social history options are:

British industrial society since the later 18th century

British rural society since the later 18th century (These two are compulsory for those taking single-subject degrees in economic and social history.)

The development of industrial relations in Great Britain and the United States of America, particularly since the 1920s

History of transport from the turnpike to the motorway

Contemporary economic and social history (from circa 1930 onwards)

Population growth and economic development with special reference to underdeveloped countries

Financial history

A short individual study based upon original sources.

From next year a course in Japanese economic history will be offered and European, North American and Russian courses are also envisaged in the near future.

It was the original (October 1965) intake of Kent students which had the opportunity of taking the Australasian course at its first airing. The importance of a common first year course as a 'shop-window' for the various social science subjects—none of which is taught extensively in schools—is shown in the difference between the original choices expressed and the actual courses taken by this first group of students. (A final decision on the Part II course can be delayed at Kent until after the Part I examination.) There were nearly 1,300 applications for places in the 1965 social science intake and of these 128 were admitted; 113 have passed Part I and successfully completed half of their Part II. The proportions for each Part II course at the three

## *Grass Castles in Green Fields*

main stages reveal the extent of the course shifts (and they can, of course, only show the *net* shifts).

	Per cent of Applicants	Per cent of Admissions	Per cent of Survivors <sup>a</sup>
Economics	30	23	20 (23)
Economic and Social History	4	7	16 (20)
Politics and Government	6	8	16 (21)
Sociology	38	35	29 (36)
Combined <sup>b</sup>	23	27	19 (—)

<sup>a</sup> Figures in brackets are the percentages which result from distributing the combined-subject degree students (as halves) amongst the several subjects.

<sup>b</sup> Includes those who applied simply for 'social sciences'.

There are no doubt several reasons for the tendency to greater equality at the final stage, but it would be surprising if it does not reflect primarily the inroads made into the dismal image of economic and social history (and largely non-existent one of politics) brought from school and, conversely, the inroads made into the more exciting images of sociology and economics.

Sixteen students opted for the first Australasian course: thirteen doing full economic and social history, two doing a combined economics and economic and social history degree and one combining economic and social history with sociology. They had all experienced four terms of economics, sociology, politics and statistics as well as a fairly standard course of British economic and social history from the mid-eighteenth century. But they knew very little about Australasia, past or present, and freely admitted that this was one of the main attractions of the course. Inevitably therefore the course became something more and less than one on Australian or New Zealand (never both!) economic and social history as it would be given in a 'home' situation. Geography, politics, anthropology and literature all entered frequently (if all too amateurishly) and the course as it emerged, particularly in discussion, would more properly be described as 'Australasia—mainly economic and historical'. Mary Durack, Alec Hope and the Wynd and Wood *Map History* probably made as significant contributions as some august economic historians.

The balance of the course favoured the nineteenth century, almost two-thirds dealing with the pre-1914 period. However, this balance reflected primarily the absence of good teaching material on the inter-war period, and a slight shift—slight because the room for manoeuvre with eighteen topics is not great—will be made as soon as some suitable literature is published. It may be worth noting the topics dealt with, in outline, because nothing would be more welcome than suggestions about the way in which a course such as this should be developed.

AUSTRALASIAN ECONOMY AND SOCIETY TODAY

1. Australia: the Lucky Country?
2. New Zealand: God's Own Country?

1788-1850

3. The spread of settlement and the main influences on its direction, nature and speed (especially the relative roles of 'command' and market pressures)
4. The changing socio-economic structure of the population of Australasia: the raw material of the 'Australian legend'
5. The staple and export-base approaches—theories—models and the alternatives in writing the economic history of 'new' countries
6. The sources of economic viability and growth in Australasia to 1850
7. The influence of the ideas and actions of the 'Systematic Colonisers' on Australian and New Zealand land disposal policy and settlement

1850-1914

8. Gold: 'causes' and consequences
9. The nature and extent of economic growth between the gold rushes and World War I and the various explanations of it (especially the Australian experience 1861-1900 as seen by Butlin, Hall and Kelley)
10. The international setting of Australasian growth (and depression) in the later 19th century: a 'swinging' world?
11. The role of the state in economic growth, with particular reference to railway construction and operation
12. Institutional change: the main features of constitutional (political) legislative development (excluding Federation) in relation to economic change ('Le socialisme sans doctrines?'); the growth of unions and state intervention in industrial relations

TWO CONTINUOUS THEMES

13. Race relations: attitudes towards and actions regarding indigenous populations and non-British migrants in Australasian history
14. Regionalism in Australasian history: the seven colonies of Australasia, Federation (or non-Federation in the case of New Zealand) and the continuing significance of regional factors (New State and Tasman Community movements)

1914-1966

15. War and the twenties: secondary growth and primary problems
16. Depression and recovery in the South Pacific: something old and something new
17. Problems of post-war affluence (I): managing the economy—choosing amongst and reconciling full employment, price stability, balance of payments equilibrium and economic growth
18. Problems of post-war affluence (II): choosing the emphases for future development—specialization or diversification; integration or insulation; concentration or decentralization; equality or incentives; controls or competition.

It is fairly clear that this course does not solve any of the four funda



mental dilemmas involved: maintaining, in a smooth and natural way, the proper balance between the economic and the social sides of history; between the macro and micro aspects of economic history; between the overall Australasian picture and the (often diverse) regional pictures; and between the internal Australasian and the global ('informal Empire') scenes. In fact, if anything the course itself tended to diminish rather than increase confidence in the possibility of resolving these dilemmas successfully in the context of two terms with students lacking the natural background information about Australasian conditions which 'natives' have. The difficulties from this source should theoretically be less than in the case of, say, a Japanese or Russian course, but the subtler differences between British and Australasian behavioural characteristics and institutional patterns are often more difficult to establish than the broader ones between Anglo-Saxon and European or Asian. As a consequence, the case for organizing the course on a thematic rather than modified chronological basis sometimes seemed strong; but on balance the latter does appear to offer greater coherence to the present audience.

One problem has assumed smaller proportions than expected. The Kent library has had considerable success in obtaining the secondary material necessary for the Australasian course—at present it holds some 300 volumes on Australasia—although the Fitzpatrick-Coghlan-Roberts sort of work has generally had to be obtained on inter-loan. Slightly more serious is the problem of back-runs of periodicals; photocopying has enabled most central articles to be prescribed but its use is obviously limited by cost. (Might I slip in a blanket request for off-prints of any articles at all connected with Australasian history, economy and society. They would be greatly appreciated.) What does promise well for the future, particularly for postgraduate work but also for those choosing the individual study option in Part II, is the amount of official publications which has been made available. The Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics and some state libraries have been particularly helpful and as a result the Commonwealth, New South Wales and Western Australia are particularly well represented. As the gaps on other states are filled thesis work on Australian economic history will become increasingly feasible; it is virtually so now because the various London libraries provide a highly effective fall-back in most cases. Staff on sabbatical leave may also find Canterbury a useful base in the future.

And the students' reaction to an Australasian course? As should be expected to any particular execution, mixed, because they have varying degrees of interest within economic and social history, as between economic and social history and other subjects in the case of combined students, and as between academic work and the rest of life. But it

*J. A. Dowie*

would be fair to say that on the question of an Australasian course *per se* the response was, at the beginning and, more tellingly, at the end, genuinely enthusiastic. There is clearly a great deal of intrinsic interest in Australasia, even, from some comments, more than in North America. And there is a ready willingness to believe that there are more things in the antipodes than the All Blacks and Rolf Harris. The present course may have just about established this.

*University of Kent at Canterbury*

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# COLONIAL POLITICS IN AUSTRALIA: A SYMPOSIUM

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J. A. RYAN

## I FACTION POLITICS: A PROBLEM IN HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

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When Dr Loveday and Professor Martin decided to pool their knowledge of the parliamentary system in the first three decades of responsible government in New South Wales, they brought together a rich harvest of research which had gone originally into their respective theses, now stored in the Ph.D. silos of Canberra and Sydney Universities. From this partnership in scholarship has come a study of the political world of 1856-89 which greatly illumines what was once a dimly lit and rather mysterious period of our colonial political history.<sup>1</sup> In *Parliament Factions and Parties* the authors present a detailed analysis of the structure and functioning of the colonial parliamentary system and a sequential story of the twenty-four ministries which rose and fell, coalesced and disintegrated in what once appeared a bewildering succession, but which we may now see in meaningful terms as the working of what the authors term 'faction' politics. Against this background they examine closely the political motives and methods of those legendary Knights of Macquarie Street, the faction leaders Cowper, Robinson, Martin, Stuart, Jennings, Dibbs and the redoubtable Parkes, who, in their battles for place and power, kept exchanging the keys to the ministerial offices of Premier, Colonial Secretary and Treasurer.

The suggestion for this partnership came from Professor Spann, who no doubt recognized, when the two theses were read end-on, a natural

<sup>1</sup> P. Loveday and A. W. Martin, *Parliament Factions and Parties The First Thirty Years of Responsible Government in New South Wales, 1856-1889*, Melbourne University Press 1966, pp xiii + 207.



period of New South Wales political history—from the beginning of responsible government in 1856 to 1889, after which it appeared that a new chapter of the colony's political history began with the emergence of two clearly defined political parties. The collaboration has certainly been fruitful. Dr Loveday has contributed the skills and methods of the political scientist and we now have for this thirty-three year period a detailed structural analysis of colonial parliamentary government—composition of ministries, the role of cabinet in government, the electoral distribution of voting support for the various groupings, and, most impressive, the labelling and close detailing in graph of the 'ins and outs' of those twenty-four faction ministries and the numerical strength of the combinations and coalitions which formed them. To this study Professor Martin brings his own knowledge of the social and economic changes in the colony, the political ideas which lay behind the concepts of government, and the sectional and general issues which shaped political debate and the policies of the faction leaders. Those familiar with Professor Martin's earlier Namier-like study of the New South Wales Assembly and his notable articles on the electoral network and political leadership of Sir Henry Parkes, will recognize his contribution to our understanding of the methods and strategies of faction politics and the interplay of human and political elements which set the style of colonial political life in this period. Martin's extensive work on the biography of Parkes, whose political wing-span covers the whole period of this study and whose figure looms so large throughout, enables him to bring to the political scientist's objectively-styled analysis a human-centred historical approach, since faction politics, by its very nature, involves personal relations.

Such a collaboration of political scientist and historian does, however, create problems which are apparent in *Parliament Factions and Parties*. The book is more than just a study of the workings of the machinery of government; beyond the question of how and why it worked in the way that it did, the authors offer a judgment on how effectively the faction system worked in the context of New South Wales society, and also attempt to explain why it gave way when it did to a new political order. This is, of course, what historians would expect; that is, if they share with Collingwood, Carr and others the belief that all history finally, is interpretation. It is as an historical interpretation that I wish to consider *Parliament Factions and Parties* and to offer some contrary views. Its important contribution to our knowledge is, I would stress beyond question.

The first point I should like to make is that the faction system of politics as interpreted by the authors involves all the problems inherent in any human history. In addition to objective evidence on electoral figures, the legislative record, voting divisions, etc, the interpretation

is based also on very subjective source material. A glance at the sources shows the extent to which private correspondence, personal reminiscences, reflections, diary notes and autobiographical material are made use of, and the amount of press, parliamentary and public comment and opinion which is assessed and incorporated into the narrative.

Understanding human motivation, personal conflicts and loyalties, group attachments and changes of allegiance, and other personal elements of which the faction system was made up, are problems familiar to the historian. There is also the problem of interpreting contemporary opinion from a distance, assessing its credibility and understanding its meaning. What, for instance, is the meaning to be taken from the keynote extract from Parkes' letter to Cowper selected by the authors as a frontispiece quotation, and obviously meant to cast illumination? Is it meant to strike the hypocritical or ironic note in regard to policies 'founded on principles' as expounded by a faction leader, or does the 'man for the hour' suggest the pragmatic prescription for faction leadership, expressed in this piece? That these observations about the nature of history are relevant might be shown by considering the view of Parkes presented by the authors in the context of the rise of the new parties. He who would seek the truth about Parkes, the 'Man and Politician'<sup>2</sup> must enter that great labyrinth of history, the hundred-odd volumes of Parkes Correspondence, where all kinds of secrets and mysteries lie unrevealed. It is like entering a hall of mirrors, where every man can find the portrait he most wants to see, and where a pre-judgment can lead one out through the same door as in he went. Obviously Loveday and Martin have been led down different corridors than I have, as I hope to later show when considering the evidence for the decline of Parkes as a faction leader, a question central to the whole interpretation of the emergence of new parties. Here we might simply point to the degree of subjectivity which enters into the authors' historical judgments. Their picture of the old faction leader in 1889, following the victory of his free trade party at the recent election, is presented thus:

the election over, freetraders had to face the question of leadership. Parkes, sulking uncertainly on the sidelines, played out an elaborate game of verbal hide-and-seek with McMillan, and finally asked that the party be informed of his unwillingness to 'accept the post of Leader in the Parliament', adding: 'The ministerial majority in the late Parliament disclosed aspects of political conduct which I do not care to meet again in ministerial office. The friends of the ministry were the first to find fault with ministerial proceedings, the foremost in attacking ministerial measures, and ever and anon the readiest

<sup>2</sup> The title of Professor Martin's article in *Melbourne Studies in Education*, Melbourne 1962.

to encourage the attacks of others. No lie could be invented too black to be listened to by professed friends.' Such ungracious remarks were an insult to a body of men who had in fact loyally supported Parkes until he himself deserted them. But Parkes' words did indicate that—as he had already pointedly told McMillan—he was well aware of the misgivings with which 'candid friends' had followed him. He chose now to retire voluntarily, with protestations of injured innocence and a pious reference to his former services to the colony: 'There are times when men are called upon to sacrifice everything for their country, but this will hardly be called such a time. Besides, I have sacrificed all the best part of my life already.'<sup>3</sup>

This is not just a picture of the old 'exhausted volcano' unable to measure up to changing conditions; it is that of a churlish and rather childish old man, bitterly resentful of his failure, retiring ungracefully from the scene over which he could no longer hold sway. Apart from my disagreement with this picture of Parkes and the historical implications which flow from it, it does reveal, I think, the limits which we must put on this book as an objective study and the problems of historical method involved. There is no condemnation here; for my part it is all the more interesting as it is, but it must not be viewed as political science.

The other problem in the writing of history which we might look at before proceeding is the historical hypothesis which each author brings to his concept of political change. Dr Loveday in earlier writings has strongly defended the group theory of politics against those critics who would deny that the interaction and pressures of interest groups provide the material for a systematic political theory.<sup>4</sup> To the uninitiated in this political science debate it is difficult to tell whether he holds to the idea of pressure groups being a single factor theory of political action, nor does one know whether he has now changed or modified his ideas, in company with others of the Sydney school. One might however, expect to find an application of such theory to the 'faction' system and the new party developments.

Professor Martin, on the other hand, apparently rejects such a theory. We find in his writings a much wider historical canvas for his interpretation, with an important role given to the individual and a recognition that ideas and social ideals can transcend social and economic group interests; and he has also explicitly stated, in reviewing Dr Loveday's work, that he does not think much of group theory as a total view of politics. In his view group theory should be regarded by the ordinary historian as 'merely one of a number of influences at work

<sup>3</sup> Loveday and Martin, op cit, pp 145-6. The quotations are from the Parkes-McMillan Correspondence.

<sup>4</sup> P. Loveday, *Group Theory and its Critics*, Sydney Studies in Politics, No 1, 1961. See also his debate with K. G. Armstrong in *APSA News*, Vol 4, No 2, 1959.



in other disciplines on the fringes of his own'.<sup>5</sup> From this, one is left to wonder about the compatibility of this academic marriage, and the problem it raises becomes evident when we try to understand the hypothesis used to explain the emergence of the new protection and free trade parties at about the same point of time. Regarding protection, the coming together of economic self-interest groups with a clear political objective seems to be the explanation with little about individual leadership and the reforming aims of social improvers. For the free trade party, however, the explanation for new party organization and political unity seems to be in terms of challenge of ideas, failing personal leadership and a new spirit abroad among young liberal-minded men. That neither explanation for the end of the faction system is adequate or consistent I hope to show.

We might now look briefly at the interpretation offered and the conclusions drawn from this 'faction' period of New South Wales political history. The central theme of this study is the working of responsible government without political parties as we have come to understand them, that is, as organized groupings with accepted political aims, adhering to a defined programme of political action, and under the control of party organization. None of these party characteristics was possessed by the loose political groupings which clustered around individual political leaders, and political life from the fifties to the eighties featured the struggle of rival leaders and their followers to gain control of the legislature.

Superficially personal, this struggle was in fact carried on between small groups of men who formed nuclei or cores around which the leaders built larger parliamentary groups, the FACTIONS, which in turn provided the basis for parliamentary majorities. The leaders had to win majorities to win office, but such majorities were often slim and always impermanent. The faction cores, on the other hand, normally lasted for a decade or more and their persistence largely explains the order and stability of the faction system.<sup>6</sup>

The emergence of this 'faction' system is explained by the fragmented nature of mid-nineteenth century society and the spread of community economic life, by the emphasis on localism and sectional interests and by the pervading influence of a 'liberal ethos' with an emphasis on 'independence' and an ideal of good government. The death of conservative, propertied-class ambitions and the diffused radicalism at the very outset of responsible government had led to this almost complete acceptance of bourgeois liberalism as the guiding principles of political life and these were adapted to 'faction' politics. 'The liberal faith was

<sup>5</sup> See 'William McMillan: A Merchant in Politics', *RAHS Jnl & Proc*, Vol 40, 1954; and a review in *Labour History*, No 4, 1963, p 55.

<sup>6</sup> Loveday and Martin, *op cit*, p 149.

a web of hopes and demands woven around a number of fixed points: the "people", the importance of stable government, the need to develop the colony and the virtues of free trade.<sup>7</sup> These points could be related and developed in a variety of ways when the occasion required. Thus all politicians could claim to be 'liberals' and faction leaders could appeal for general support for their liberal principles.

In this way politics became partyless, and the cement of the factions which grew about men and not policies was loyalty to a leader who might be seen to best represent these principles. Faction leaders, though free to appeal for support on the vaguest of liberal political principles, were also limited in their controls by the 'liberal ethos' itself and thus a whole complex of personal relations, electoral agencies and networks was built up, and while the task of control developed great skills of manipulation, in terms of political morality and ethics, ends justified some very doubtful means. Compromise, procrastination and adjustment were the hallmarks of leadership but, as Parkes put it, faction leaders were recognized as 'superior men', and throughout the period, their dramatic contests for power, their alliances, broken partnerships and whirlwind election campaigns, following sudden dissolutions, gave a theatrical quality to colonial politics. Martin has described the contests of the seventies when Parkes and Robertson, his chief rival, struggled for power. 'Like Spartan Kings they alternately reigned: Parkes 1872-5, Robertson 1875-7, each briefly in 1877. Then came a deadlock, to be resolved at the end of 1878, when the old enemies coalesced, to form under Parkes' premiership a ministry that lasted five years and provided what was up to that time a record period of stable government.'<sup>8</sup>

This was the 'faction system' and once its impress was placed upon colonial government it remained the characteristic expression of New South Wales political life. Despite the presence of serious divisions of opinion and interest in the colony such as the land, education and labour questions; despite the waste of time, energy and money involved in the twenty-four ministry changes and fourteen general elections; and despite the concern and mounting criticism of contemporaries, the faction system remained unaltered to the point set by Loveday and Martin at 1887—but, in my view, for some years later. The authors challenge the criticism of contemporaries, whom they claim were unable to see the advantages of the faction system and who were too influenced by Burke's definition of a party (why Burke's definition should predominate among practical colonial thinkers is not obvious): they attribute to these years a high degree of stability and consider the faction system aptly suited to this stage of colonial development. This interpretation challenges some well established verdicts on this period

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p 22.

<sup>8</sup> A. W. Martin, *Henry Parkes*, Melbourne 1964, p 14.

and has all the interest and appeal of a well argued viewpoint. I would like to develop a few reasons why I find it difficult to accept.

The coherence and stability of the faction system rested on the clear location of power and initiative in the faction Cabinet, and the ability of faction ministries to handle the problems of governing and administering a developing society. I do not think this has been demonstrated by any assessment of Cabinet's role in relation to the other branches of government—the Governor, Executive Council, Civil Service and Parliament. Loveday and Martin write that 'the position of the Governor had been transformed'<sup>9</sup> but in what way is not clear, as the only assessment of any governor's role is that of Denison at the very outset (1855-61) and there is no real evidence to support the idea that the active role of the governor had weakened or was subservient to the ministry. Recent research in this field<sup>10</sup> suggests that a strong, politically-minded governor, such as Sir Hercules Robinson (1872-9), could exercise considerable influence, which could be decisive, and even as late as 1890 Governor Carrington virtually refused to accept a minister's resignation recommended by the Premier (Parkes) and, by his influence, had the resignation withdrawn.<sup>11</sup>

Similarly it is not clear how much these rapidly changing ministries depended upon their senior public servants or what influence such men as Halloran and Lane exercised in administration and policy. It would be surprising, given the insecurity of ministerial direction, if it was not very considerable, as P. N. Lamb has shown in the case of Geoffrey Eagar, the permanent head of the Treasury (1872-81). Eagar's experience and knowledge of the public accounts made him practically indispensable and Treasurers had to accept dictation by a strong-minded and independent official, since the unravelling of public finance procedures confounded most politicians. McMillan, an efficient and knowledgeable Treasurer, confessed in 1889 that 'it would be impossible for me, unless I were closeted with the Under Secretary for Finance and Trade, to get an intelligent view of the state of public finances'.<sup>12</sup>

If one argues that good government and progressive legislation in this period were attributable to the faction ministries, the natural inference is that legislative initiative was with the ministry. This, I think, is now open to question, as it can be seriously doubted if ministries even regarded their role in government as that of initiators of legislation. Certainly it appears from recent research into the legislative records

<sup>9</sup> Loveday and Martin, *op cit*, p 151.

<sup>10</sup> N. B. Nairn and Martha Rutledge, work in progress for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*; and Neil Graham, work in progress, Macquarie University.

<sup>11</sup> N. B. Nairn, 'A Note on a Colonial Treasurer's Resignation', *Historical Studies*, Vol 13, No 49, 1967, p 95.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in P. N. Lamb, 'Geoffrey Eagar and the Colonial Treasury of New South Wales', *Australian Economic Papers*, Vol 1, No 1, 1962, p 40.



of the nineteenth-century colonial parliaments, that a great deal of legislation including public bills began life as private members' bills. One must also consider the tremendous wastage of legislative energies and effort in the loss of bills, which must be attributed largely to the lack of ministerial support and direction and the frequent changes of faction majorities, and to the tactical moves of faction leaders in gaining political advantage. Important legislation was often thus lost or had to be reintroduced in a new parliament or session: e.g. Buchanan's Felony and Misdemeanour Bill was introduced in the ninth parliament and reintroduced again in each of the three sessions of the tenth parliament. Added to the waste was the clogging of the legislative machinery by this build-up of lost bills and causes, and the uncontrolled expression of the liberal principle of parliamentary independence of action by which all members felt it was their right, and perhaps their function, to initiate parochial and personal legislation. As an example, The Lodger's Protection Bill introduced by L. F. Heydon on behalf of a lady friend, although ridiculed, occupied parliament for a considerable time in 1889.<sup>13</sup> The lack of firm executive control over legislation, and the free rein given to minority opinion and individual initiative, present a picture in contrast to that of our strongly directed Cabinet-controlled ministry of the faction system. Thus one might well conclude that the legislative achievements of the period were due, not so much to the stable and firm system of faction government, but to responsible private members of parliament concerned to promote the welfare and progress of the community and forced to battle against the instability and lack of control by governments. Supporting this, we find that in the period from 1856 to the first session of 1891 503 private bills were introduced and 217 dropped for one reason or another; 3485 public bills were introduced and 2221 were dropped. As a sample of ministerial activity and the fate of public bills, the 1872-3 Session is a fair guide:

1872 Session (Martin Ministry followed by Parkes): of 31 public bills introduced (10 by ministers), 4 were passed (3 of ministers) and 27 dropped (7 of ministers).

1872-3 Session (Parkes Ministry): of 67 public bills introduced (31 by ministers), 26 were passed (19 of ministers) and 41 dropped (18 of ministers).<sup>14</sup>

When we go beyond the problems of government itself to the large question of policies and programmes, judgments are difficult to make. The adherence to policies such as free trade, land disposal and settlement, secular education, and state-developed services gives a sense of continuity to governmental action and undoubtedly faction leader

<sup>13</sup> I am indebted to Miss Robin Parsons of Macquarie University for these examples from her research on the role of lawyers in the New South Wales Parliament.

<sup>14</sup> From research kindly made available by N. B. Nairn and Martha Rutledge.

were conscious of the need for some long-term planning. But the very nature of the faction system—with its dependence on sectional and local groupings, with its absence of clearly defined policy programmes, with its belief in 'good administration' as the hallmark of government, and without the security of long tenure—inevitably meant an emphasis on short-term, adaptable policies and a concentration on popular measures.

The long-term implications of the financial and banking policies are well known, as are the consequences of the 'wholesale alienation of the public estate', when in the years 1872-82, 25 million acres were alienated, compared to 4.9 million acres in Victoria.<sup>15</sup> This land sale policy culminated in the financial mess of the twelfth parliament when economic conditions brought on a budget crisis and the ministries of Stuart, Dibbs, Robertson and Jennings all collapsed in a total parliamentary life of fourteen months. The legacy of these 'faction' ministry financial policies was seen in the economic crisis of the early nineties. The continued absence of any political division based on deeper social and economic issues, in a period of rapidly changing colonial life, left New South Wales without progressive policies in such fields as industrial legislation, taxation, electoral reform, and law reform, and led to the widespread concern and dissatisfaction of contemporaries with the whole character of parliamentary life. An example of the failure of government to provide at least the legal means by which the increased tempo of industrial and commercial life could be regulated and facilitated is the absence of law reform in the eighties, despite the efforts of lawyers to point out the relevant reform in English law, and individual attempts in the Assembly to initiate such legislation. In 1887, B. R. Wise, the Attorney-General in Parkes' government, asserted that 'our legal system is probably more behind the times than that of any large community of the English speaking people'.<sup>16</sup> Though one may ask, as Professor Dahl does from his reading of the Loveday-Martin study, why the system worked as well as it did, from another approach one could ask how government could be as bad as it was.

It was this question that was being asked with increasing insistence as the faction governments faced the accumulated problems of the 1880s and the community became more disillusioned with its Bear Garden in Macquarie Street. The *Sydney Morning Herald* expressed a general sentiment when it consigned the fourteenth parliament into oblivion. It commented on the 'muddled bewilderment' of such a state of affairs when a ministry with a large majority which had not been defeated on a question of policy 'had just abandoned their seats' and

<sup>15</sup> P. N. Lamb, 'Crown Land Policy and Government Finance in New South Wales 1856-1900', *Australian Economic History Review*, Vol 7, No 1, 1967, p 51.

<sup>16</sup> N.S.W. Parliamentary Debates, Vol 27, p 2392: second reading of the Bills of Exchange Bill.

left the leader of the opposition to carry on the government, even though the temper of the House was against him. It pointed to the confusion and the effect on commerce and industry which this chaotic situation had brought about; and condemned the low tone of parliamentary life, waste of time, and scenes of disorder and violence which had made the last Assembly 'the worst in the colony's history'. 'It would be hard to find any Parliament since representative government began that managed to turn out so little solid work, or that made more noise about it.' The last rites over the dead parliament were pronounced in a few brief words: 'It would be a happy thing for the country if it could be said with the assurance of true prophecy "We shall never look upon their like again".'<sup>17</sup>

This wish expressed by the *Herald* in 1885 is in fact fulfilled by Loveday and Martin, for their second major conclusion is that the faction system virtually ceased to be the characteristic of New South Wales colonial politics after 1887. They regard this year as the dividing line between faction and party government and see the election of 1887, fought over the fiscal issue of free trade or protection, and featuring well-developed electoral organizations, as the beginnings of a new era of party politics in New South Wales. This is at present a controversial historical question; whether the electoral organizations that emerged in 1887 merit the designation of political parties or whether they were the prototypes of the Labour party which entered upon the political stage in 1891, will be avoided here since much depends upon the definition of a political party and the ground selected for the argument.<sup>18</sup>

Undoubtedly a new element entered political life with the development of these electoral machines and the single dividing issue gave some point to Parkes' hoisting of the 'flag of free trade' as his election banner. But the real point as it concerns this study of faction politics is whether the new issue and party forms destroyed the faction system in parliament or whether the old faction leaders began to lose control and influence in government. Loveday and Martin argue that they did; my conclusion is that they did not. Given our definition of party as parliamentary control and discipline and the limitation of individual party leadership by pledged programmes or policies, in my view there was no real non-labour party government until 1895 when the two veteran faction leaders, Parkes the free trader and Dibbs the protectionist, were virtually drummed off the political parade ground after one last characteristic flourish, a coalition, in an attempt to defeat their mutual enemy, the free trade party leader G. H. Reid. Until 1895

<sup>17</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 Jan 1887.

<sup>18</sup> I will leave this debate to Mr Nairn and the authors. See however Mr Nairn's article 'The Political Mastery of Sir Henry Parkes: New South Wales Politics 1871-1891', *RAHS Jnl & Proc*, Vol 53, 1967.



government leadership had remained in the hands of one or other of these two faction leaders, and despite party labels and the influence of the third party, Labour, both men continued to rule in the old style. Their grip was never seriously threatened and they successfully avoided implementing the policies which they championed at each election. It is this question of continuing individual party leadership after 1887 that I believe is missed by Loveday and Martin.

The argument for the protection party develops earlier work which emphasizes the aggregation of economic group interests—farmers, manufacturers and working men—into a political movement with a clear prescription for protective duties, and a growing propaganda campaign. Electoral organization developed, but when the members gathered in parliament there was no leader who could give to the party any real identity of purpose, for apart from the tariff issue the spread of interests and attitudes was very wide. The outcome was that after six months Dibbs, the experienced faction leader, offered (or was he invited?) his leadership, and after his apocalyptic conversion from free trade to protection, held the leadership until 1894 despite his failure to achieve any protectionist legislation; he nevertheless remained premier for three years. The extent to which his following could be termed a party is well illustrated when he formed his first government and expressed the intention 'to choose only men who will command the respect of both sides of the House'. His disillusioned supporter, E. W. O'Sullivan's, remark strikes the real note: he had 'left all the staunch men of the protectionist party out in the cold'.<sup>19</sup>

The rise of the free trade party, although different, has the same bearing on the question of leadership. Parkes, who, in fact, decided upon the 'great principle of free trade' for the 1887 election, and so virtually set the new pattern of party division, ruled unchallenged through the governments of 1887 and 1889 despite his failure to implement a free trade programme and the disillusionment of his younger followers. Loveday and Martin conclude that these younger men, inspired by new liberal principles and chafing under the old style leadership, challenged Parkes and won places in the 1889 ministry, thereby ending the old man's control, and when he resigned from party leadership in 1891 they pushed him aside.

One can find a very different version in the Parkes Correspondence where the 'new men', Smith, McMillan, Wise and Carruthers all pay great tribute to his leadership, send a deputation to seek his decision, and agonize long over the selection of a new leader, before reluctantly accepting G. H. Reid.<sup>20</sup> That these 'new men' represented a new party

<sup>19</sup> Bruce Mansfield, *Australian Democrat: The Career of Edward William O'Sullivan 1846-1910*, Sydney 1965, p 97.

<sup>20</sup> Parkes Correspondence, Vol 37, p 207; Vol 42, p 316.

philosophy is far from the truth of the matter since Wise, an Oxford Toynbee liberal, had virtually nothing in common with Smith, an extreme exponent of Spencerian individualism, while McMillan and Carruthers were also at odds over land tax and bank policies. The relations between Parkes and these 'new men' remained close during Reid's leadership and in 1893 Wise could write to Parkes: 'I cannot give up hope of seeing you again in office as P.M. . . . If any man can lift us out of our lamentable confusion and misfortune it is yourself, and I see no-one else who can.'<sup>21</sup> Though Parkes did remain out of power after 1891 the possibility of his return was never really lost until the last hopeless venture in 1895, and although the members of his old party, now under the label of the new, affected great horror and exhausted their biblical and classical scholarship in seeking allusions to such an unholy alliance, the text of their speeches was rather the negation of government represented by a new round of faction politics, than a profession of loyalty to their party principles.

The Loveday and Martin interpretation of the end of factions misses, I believe, the real significance of this period of New South Wales politics. The continuation of the faction system of government throughout this period of colonial history had an important bearing on the future of our party politics. By failing to achieve a realistic division of political thought and opinion in New South Wales, and by finally making a party division over the politically unnatural issue of fiscalism, the natural grouping of progressive elements was thwarted during this period of rapid change. Thus the way was opened for the emergence of a horizontal class party, establishing strong class divisions in political life that are only now being broken. The other consequence was to separate intellectual radicalism from the Labour movement, which appears in retrospect to have been to its great disadvantage. The further question as to why Australian politics has never attracted the leading men in society as in America is also perhaps related to the 'factional' character of political life in this formative period.

*Parliament Factions and Parties* is undoubtedly an important book which has added greatly to our knowledge and understanding of this period, and has opened new avenues of research and posed new questions. It will be interesting to see its impact on work now in progress for the official history of the New South Wales Parliament (Professor Martin and Dr Loveday are members of the consultative committee) and for the political biographies of this period in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. It seems to me that the main conclusions of Loveday and Martin may not hold the field in the light of these new studies.

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<sup>21</sup> Wise to Parkes, 23 Dec 1893. Parkes Correspondence, Vol 22, p 271.

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GEOFFREY BARTLETT

## II THE POLITICAL ORDERS OF VICTORIA AND NEW SOUTH WALES, 1856-1890

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It would be surprising if there had not been a great deal of similarity between the political structures of New South Wales and Victoria before 1890. As the immigrants to both colonies had come from the four nations of the British Isles, in roughly similar proportions, their ideas of what politics should be about and how it should be run differed little.<sup>1</sup> The two constitutions were framed on the same model, by men of similar social and ideological backgrounds and adjusted to meet somewhat similar situations and forebodings. Similar pressures brought the further democratization of the late fifties. They shared the ideas of a country and Assembly divided into two parties of principle, one conservative, one progressive, and of political decisions arrived at independently and individually on each issue, whether by electors or elected.

Further, the structure of their societies brought these two ideas into conflict, and generally assured the supremacy of the latter. The social affiliations which integrate men with societies having been shaken by emigration, it is not surprising that individualism was rampant, often in undesirable forms, in political as well as in social and economic life.<sup>2</sup> The idea of class-based politics existed, but it was far from dominating Britain yet, and was still more difficult to maintain where social mobility was greater and industrial units were much smaller.

Of the imported ties which influenced politics, therefore, sectional ones predominated, especially as the Irish Catholic (and therefore the Orange) influence was spread thickly over most constituencies. Moreover, where local needs were pressing and communications often difficult, and where centres of settlement were largely controlled not by inheritors but by creators, the most important new ties were local. Politically, therefore, a man was commonly defined by his habitation, faith, nationality, occupation and attitude towards liquor.<sup>3</sup> Only when society was acutely divided upon a political question, which it never was for long, did the idea of class or party have much political

<sup>1</sup> Except among themselves, of course, Victorian radicals always regarded organization more favourably than did their opponents. For contemporary views on organization, see G. R. Bartlett, *Political Organisation and Society in Victoria 1864-1883*, Ph.D. thesis, A.N.U. 1964, pp 110-120, and ch 6, I, II and IV.

<sup>2</sup> Corruption cases, and court proceedings involving politicians, were tolerably frequent in Victoria during the sixties. See M. Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday*, Melbourne 1961, ch. 12. For others, *Argus*, 3-6 May 1867 (Sands); 20-21 Aug 1867 (McCann); 20 Nov 1868, 20 May 1867 (Cowell).

<sup>3</sup> Bartlett, *op cit*, ch 2, II.



significance. Only then could parliamentary leaders control M.L.A.s by substantially influencing their chances of election.

The effect, in both parliaments, was an obvious instability. Dr Loveday and Professor Martin have shown, however, that a political order did exist in the New South Wales Assembly.<sup>4</sup> There were always two or more faction leaders, surrounded by small but devoted coteries, and variable numbers of supporters somewhat less reliable. The origins of this loyalty might vary, but it was essentially personal: the occupations of members and constituents were more or less evenly represented in all factions. Power was sought by alliances, seducing each other's fringe adherents, and wooing the numerous independents. Not until the eighties, when the fragmentation of society was passing, sectional organizations were sufficiently strong to influence parliament, and eventually financial problems divided the country and Assembly more sharply than before, was the system shaken.<sup>5</sup> Even then, faction leaders survived for some time by championing one rival cause or another. With this political polarization went the rapid creation of disciplined parties allied to substantial external organizations, a development soon confirmed by the creation of the Labor Party.

In Victoria, however, although personalities were very important, a different pattern emerged.<sup>6</sup> There were two basic models. The first was a division between relatively stable and disciplined parties of left and right, with few independents or none; this appeared first in 1861, reaching two peaks during the constitutional crises of the late sixties and late seventies. The second model which followed these crises (after a brief transition) was a grand coalition opposed by a few assorted independents and malcontents. The only faction of any importance was that of James McCulloch. It is difficult to say, however, when that faction began or ended. Its continuous history began in 1863, but during the polarization of 1865-9 it disappeared in the Loyal Liberal Party, and although it can be clearly distinguished between 1869 and 1872 it was split in 1871 and a year later, after McCulloch's departure for England, it became the core of the first grand coalition. Although McCulloch took this over by a brilliant coup in 1875, and remained

<sup>4</sup> P. Loveday and A. W. Martin, *Parliament Factions and Parties*, Melbourne 1966, ch 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, ch 6.

<sup>6</sup> My conclusions on Victorian political groupings were arrived at by methods similar to those of Loveday and Martin, *op cit*, pp 39-42. I hope to present them more fully in a later article, and to give a connected account of Victorian politics between 1861 and 1883 in a book now under way. A somewhat sketchy resumé of Victorian politics between 1864 and 1883 is available in Bartlett, *op cit*, ch 6.

<sup>7</sup> The name was first used, in fact, in 1868, being derived from its external organization, the Loyal Liberal Reform Association. (On which, and on its opponents the Constitutional Association, see Bartlett, *op cit*, ch 6, I.) However, as the party was basically the same, it is convenient to use it retrospectively.

its head until 1877, it cannot be said to have had a separate existence after 1872. The problem of identification is increased by the frequent changes in the membership of McCulloch's following, especially during the frequent elections of the later sixties.

McCulloch was undoubtedly lucky that of his potential opponents during the sixties two were discredited, one died and the other refused on principle to form a party.<sup>8</sup> His skill also improved his luck: in 1875, for example, he used radicals, independents and dissatisfied right wingers to overthrow the coalition, and then, after the briefest of radical interludes, to form a new government which included half the former Cabinet. All his luck and skill, however, would not alone have assured his long predominance. This he owed to his battles with the Council, which, although they cost him the support of most of the commercial and professional elite to which he belonged, gave him compensating gains on the left and enabled him, by the intense feeling which the crises evoked, to control the chances of election of most members. The free trade-conservative opposition was reduced to a helpless if compact minority, and left-wing dissidents were forced to obey or lose their seats, until some time after the crises were over.

The periods of excitement, now under McCulloch, later under Berry, were brief; even after parliamentary life had returned to that relative isolation which was the norm in both colonies, however, it helped to prevent the establishment of a faction system. In the quiet times after 1869, the basic moderation of McCulloch and his closest supporters became more evident, and he suffered losses on the left. Despite the common political interest of the old and new oppositions in defeating him, however, it soon became clear that the former feared the latter's desire for yet higher duties and a renewed assault on the Council. After McCulloch had fallen on his proposals for meeting a financial shortage in 1871,<sup>9</sup> the Duffy Ministry's twenty per cent duties and skirmishes with the Council confirmed the lesson. Fear combined with ambition (and a touch of bigotry) to drive the moderates together into the first grand coalition.

A similar thing happened after Berry's successful polarization of parties between 1875 and 1880.<sup>10</sup> It became clear, after the 1880 and

<sup>8</sup> O'Shanassy and Duffy, leaders of the 1861-3 Ministry, were discredited by the fiasco of the latter's Land Act; Heales, the leader of the radical opposition, joined McCulloch as Minister of Lands in 1864, but died next year. Higinbotham, the radical hero of the late sixties, was at first McCulloch's Attorney-General, and later, disgusted at the refusal of governments after 1868 to fight the Council to the end, generally supported the government of the day.

<sup>9</sup> His government proposed a moderate increase in duties and a property tax. In fairness to McCulloch, who is often represented as a mere opportunist, one may say that in his opposition to high duties, and in his support for direct taxation of the well-to-do, he was quite consistent.

<sup>10</sup> Bartlett, *op cit*, ch 6, II.

1883 elections had established an evenly divided House, that the only hope of preventing future strife and continuing with the country's retarded business was another coalition. The Reform Act of 1881 and the consequent alienation of Berry's extremists removed the main obstacles; a large amount of 'practical legislation' was passed and accepted by the reformed Council, and no new issues seriously disturbed politics for another seven prosperous years. The government party therefore acquired a solidarity which no personal ambition could shake, even when the original leaders retired. The idea of 'good government',<sup>11</sup> used in Sydney to justify the frequent dismissal of governments on minor issues and to ignore questions which might cut across factions, was appropriated in Melbourne for a strong coalition by contrast with the previous political disorder.

So far the Victorian political order may seem to be a matter of political accident, and to some extent it was.<sup>12</sup> Certain long-term influences, however, disposed it to the polarizing periods of disorder with their unifying aftermaths. In New South Wales, the amount of Crown land available for auction delayed the need to reconsider fiscal policies until the mid-eighties, when they quickly destroyed the faction system. In Victoria, although land revenue remained extremely important, it was not very elastic. The urgent need for development expenditure ensured that surpluses were used to improve services rather than to reduce taxation, so that expectations rose with income and retrenchment in lean times became politically almost impossible. The determination to make land settlement a success, at last, despite legislative and practical difficulties, progressively reduced the room to manoeuvre whenever a recession reduced revenue.<sup>13</sup> During the depression of the sixties, the failure to secure a tolerably satisfactory Land Act before 1865 crippled revenue, and led to the tariff proposals which produced the first constitutional crisis. The 1869 Land Act, by its very success and the provision that £200,000 of land revenue must be devoted to railway construction each year, combined with a brief recession in 1871 to revive the fiscal question;<sup>14</sup> when this was settled by the return of prosperity and the twenty per cent duties, the grand coalition promptly increased expenditure, and further hampered itself by deciding to stop auctioning country lands. Then its policy of rationalizing the tariff, coupled with the need to increase taxation in face of another recession, shook the coalition and gave Berry his chance to polarize politics once more.

<sup>11</sup> Loveday and Martin, *op cit*, pp 57-63.

<sup>12</sup> Bartlett, *op cit*, pp 153-8.

<sup>13</sup> For New South Wales, see Loveday and Martin, *op cit*, pp 121-2; for the Victorian position, see *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 12, pp 530-6, and Vol 21, pp 696-701.

<sup>14</sup> McCulloch explicitly linked the need for direct taxation with the Land Act introduced in his second administration, *VDP*, Vol 12, p 264.



The financial difficulties of the late seventies had much to do with the conservative resurgence of 1880, which eventually produced the coalition of 1883-90. The return of budgetary difficulties in the nineties destroyed the coalition and eventually produced a fresh polarization.<sup>15</sup>

The second obvious difference was in the strength of the Legislative Councils. The Council in New South Wales was soon tamed, but in Victoria there was no means of freeing deadlocks, and the ultra-conservatives, especially the pastoralists, were willing to exploit their powers to the full.<sup>16</sup> Granted that the 1865 tariff had already begun to polarize the Assembly, it was the Council's rejection of the Budget to which the tariff was tacked, and the consequent popular uproar, which completed the process and established protection as 'settled policy'. Whenever financial problems recurred, protection, now associated with opposition to the pretensions of the Council, immediately became the shibboleth for separating left from right, and the recollection of the bitterness of past conflicts added greatly to its emotional force. Similarly, it was the Council's continual obstruction during 1871-5 and its rejection of the 1878 Budget which enabled Berry to turn his campaign for a land tax into a crusade for constitutional reform.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, certain social differences strengthened the Victorian left, with its greater liking for organization and discipline; they also, by their influence on the composition of the Assembly, promoted both an abrupt social and occupational difference between the Houses and a relative homogeneity of opinion in the Assembly in quiet times which facilitated the grand coalitions. Despite the operation of plural voting, the under-representation of Melbourne and, perhaps most important of all, a registration heavily biased against non-ratepayers,<sup>18</sup> Victoria possessed a sure radical majority, provided that electors could be persuaded to see politics in terms of a conflict between left and right, squatter-haters and squatter-lovers.

To some extent this difference from New South Wales was the result of the greater percentage of the Victorian population which arrived during the gold rushes, but perhaps more important was the geographical distribution of potential radicals. As mining towns, great and small,

<sup>15</sup> M. G. Finlayson, *Victorian Politics 1889-1894*, M.A. thesis, Melbourne, ch 1.

<sup>16</sup> On the Victorian Council, see G. Serle, 'The Victorian Legislative Council, 1856-1950', *Historical Studies*, 6, 1954, p 22.

<sup>17</sup> As I hope to demonstrate, however, the Council's position in 1871-5 was often perfectly reasonable, justified in terms of its function as protector of property rights, or the result of provocation or mismanagement by governments. In 1878, Berry's party was at least as willing as the Council for a deadlock; see his election speech in *Argus*, 13 Feb 1877, and cf VDP, Vol 17, pp 1267-71 for the views of his mentor Higinbotham in 1873 on how to defeat the Council.

<sup>18</sup> Under the 1863 Electoral Act, ratepayers were enrolled automatically; others had to apply for an elector's right. Roughly one-third of adult males were always off the rolls. On the registration system, see Bartlett, op cit, pp 136-48.

were almost ubiquitous, and close settlement was achieved earlier in inland Victoria, by 1885 pastoralists had practically vanished from the Assembly, and other conservatives had been severely limited in numbers. In New South Wales, however, pastoralists—let alone others of allied interests or similar outlook—accounted for a third of the Assembly in the sixties, and still about a quarter by the late seventies.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, as pastoralists were fairly evenly distributed among the factions in Sydney, and strong among those independents upon whom nearly all New South Wales governments depended, it is difficult not to see in this one of the main reasons for delay in amending the Robertson Land Acts. Could they have also helped to delay other reforms, not by the more spectacular means of the Victorian Council, but by the more effective means of preventing their being seriously entertained so that it became more difficult to arouse public opinion and polarize the Assembly?<sup>20</sup> If so, the apparent liberal consensus in New South Wales politics was largely an expedient silence, and the noisy Victorian conflicts over fiscal policy obscured a degree of unanimity on most other questions which eventually, after the 1881 Reform Act, brought Victorian political tranquillity just as New South Wales was going into travail.

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### III FROM RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT TO PARTY POLITICS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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In *Parliament Factions and Parties* Peter Loveday and Allan Martin advance two major assertions about politics in New South Wales in the first thirty years of responsible government. The first is that despite an appearance of chaos and instability, the politics of this period gained a significant measure of coherence and order through the operation of a system of parliamentary factions. It was the existence of faction which enabled responsible government to work in the colonial environ-

<sup>19</sup> For percentages of the Assembly see Loveday and Martin, *op cit*, p 51, Table 1. The size of the pastoralist element among the independents can be roughly estimated by applying the percentages in this Table to the absolute figures in Table 2, on pp 44 and 45; the importance of the independents is clear from Table 1, on p 41.

<sup>20</sup> All agreed on the need for Council reform, but not on its nature; and nobody would trust the good faith of his opponents, especially after the 1878 crisis had inflamed politics. By 1880, however, the opposing positions had become close enough for the question to be settled. (See Bartlett, *op cit*, pp 46-7, 63-71.)

ment, the authors argue, and much of their book is devoted to an analysis of how the factions were formed and maintained and how faction leaders manoeuvred to make and break ministries, by themselves or in coalition with other factions. The second assertion is that in the late 1880s the factions were gradually displaced by protectionist and free trade parties, which introduced into the colony some of the organizational techniques later perfected by the Labour Party, and thus prepared the way for the 'painless acceptance' of that party in 1891. It is not our intention in this article to discuss the accuracy of these assertions about New South Wales politics, but rather to see how far they may be used to throw light on the political development of Western Australia in a comparable period.

Several factors complicate such a comparison between the two colonies. By the time responsible government was granted to Western Australia in 1890, it had been in operation for thirty-five years in the eastern colonies, and Western Australia could not but be influenced by the experience of its neighbours in the intervening period, though the extent of this is hard to gauge. On the other hand, despite the time lag Western Australia was still much more sparsely populated and economically less developed in 1890 than New South Wales had been in 1856. The nature and location of the resources of the two colonies differed appreciably, as did the character of society within them. Moreover, whilst the first thirty years of responsible government in New South Wales occurred within a context of social stability and sustained but even economic growth, the economy and society of Western Australia were revolutionized in the fifteen years after 1890 by the discovery of gold and its consequences. In view of these considerations it would be unwise to look for a direct and simple correlation between political developments in the two colonies, but some interesting points of similarity and difference do occur.

Immediately prior to the inauguration of responsible government there was a vague expectation in Western Australia, as there had been in New South Wales, that a two-party system would emerge as soon as the new constitution came into operation.<sup>1</sup> No organized factions or parties had existed in the old Legislative Council though common regional interests had often drawn groups of elected members into temporary association. There was also a more fundamental though imprecise cleavage between the small band of urban professional men with liberal tendencies, and the dominant group of conservatives, most of whom represented country constituencies and were themselves landowners. Debate on the Constitution Bill of 1889 accentuated the division between liberals and conservatives and encouraged an ill-founded belief

<sup>1</sup> *Eastern Districts Chronicle*, 20 Oct 1890.



that there would be two parties in the new parliament with political reform the issue between them. Thus far the story closely resembles that recounted by Loveday and Martin, but whereas in New South Wales the expectation of party politics along liberal-conservative lines lingered for several years until superseded by the emergence of factions, in Western Australia it was entirely stillborn. Instead, John Forrest succeeded from the first in creating a stable ministry which commanded such general support as to stifle the development of rival groups.

The first election under the new constitution was very confused. The governor had given no indication whom he was likely to call upon to form the first ministry; there were no leaders to define the issues; all candidates campaigned as individuals and stressed local constituency concerns. Even when the results were available no one was certain what they meant. Two men seemed to have claims upon the premiership: John Forrest, because he was the only member of the old Executive Council of officials to seek and secure election to the new parliament; and Stephen Henry Parker, because he had been the acknowledged leader of the elected members of the old Legislative Council in the movement to secure responsible government. Forrest was anxious to be premier and began months in advance to sound out possible colleagues and seek promises of support from prospective members.<sup>2</sup> Parker at first made half-hearted efforts of the same kind,<sup>3</sup> but later rendered the governor's choice easier by publicly declaring that Forrest should be sent for.<sup>4</sup> It was thus by general consent that in December 1890 Sir William Robinson commissioned Forrest to form the first ministry. This Forrest had no difficulty in doing.

When parliament met and Forrest announced a policy of extensive borrowing to finance an ambitious programme of public works it soon became clear that the government could rely on regular support from two-thirds of the members, though some of these sat on the cross-benches rather than directly behind the ministry. Of the other ten members, four or five, including Parker, sat directly opposite the government whilst the remainder sat on the cross-benches but voted against Forrest more often than with him. Even these members disavowed any desire to turn the government out, and were not so much opposed to it as watchfully critical. Some of them were liberals, but others were extreme conservatives who were alarmed by the magnitude of Forrest's borrowing and building policy. There was thus no unity among the government's critics, and throughout the life of the first parliament there was nothing which could be called an organized opposition. Moreover by tacit

<sup>2</sup> Forrest to Burt, 12 June 1890. (*Forrest-Burt Correspondence*, copies held in History Department, University of Western Australia.)

<sup>3</sup> Burt to Forrest, July 1890.

<sup>4</sup> *West Australian*, 1 Dec 1890.

agreement among members of all shades of opinion, controversial questions such as political reform were kept in abeyance so that the government could prosecute its programme of public works without hindrance.

General elections in 1894 and 1897 did not make any major alterations to these patterns of political activity established in 1891. The composition of the ministry changed over the years but its policies did not, and despite periodic increases in the size of the Legislative Assembly Forrest continued to enjoy the support of two-thirds of its members. In 1894 the critics of the government chose George Randell as the first official Leader of the Opposition, and thereafter they acted more in concert.<sup>5</sup> But apart from George Leake, who succeeded Randell in 1895, none of the oppositionists was interested in displacing Forrest and seeking power himself; indeed Leake had often to exhort his colleagues not to 'sit on the Opposition side and vote with the Government . . .'.<sup>6</sup>

In the meantime the demographic character of Western Australia was changing dramatically as tens of thousands of diggers flocked to the recently-discovered eastern goldfields in the waterless hinterland of the colony and swamped the small existing population which was concentrated in agricultural and pastoral areas along the coast. Most of the new arrivals came from the eastern colonies and were accustomed to a more democratic and liberal political tradition, and despite the reluctance of the old colonists to relinquish their grip on the colony's affairs, the changing character of colonial society was gradually reflected in parliament. In the face of these developments the conservative oppositionists of earlier years began to rally behind Forrest in defence of the status quo. This meant that after 1897 the opposition was more homogeneous and more liberal, but although it gained some recruits from the new constituencies it was still heavily outnumbered. For while politics continued to be dominated by the demand for public works, Forrest was able to play off one area of the goldfields against another, and had little difficulty in maintaining himself in office for the first decade of responsible government—a feat unrivalled in any other colony.

It is clear therefore that Western Australia did not experience the political instability, be it real or apparent, which marked the early years of responsible government in New South Wales. Neither was there the fierce conflict for office between competing factions which Loveday and Martin describe. It is also doubtful whether Forrest was a faction leader in the New South Wales sense, though it is certainly true that factional characteristics and techniques did have a place in Western Australian politics. Many of Forrest's followers had a strong sense of personal loyalty to their chief and some were bound to him by past or anticipated

<sup>5</sup> *Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, New Series* (hereafter WAPD), Vol 6, pp 27-30.

<sup>6</sup> WAPD, Vol 8, p 63.

favours. By the late 1890s both ministerialists and oppositionists had begun to hold caucus meetings from time to time,<sup>7</sup> and the leading men of both sides were electioneering on a colony-wide basis. For example, Forrest often arranged to be invited to a marginal constituency so that he 'could see what the needs of the district were', and once there, he usually managed to combine commendation of the ministerialist candidate with suitable promises of public works.<sup>8</sup>

However, in Western Australia the development of factionalism was checked by the strength of regionalism, as each area competed with every other for the roads, railways, telegraph lines, and public buildings which only the government could afford to provide. Though this was a problem which all the Australian colonies had in common it was more acute in Western Australia because of the vast distances, the small population, and the backlog of essential works that had piled up due to the cautious policies imposed by the British government during the prolonged period of colonial tutelage. Throughout the 1890s competition for public works rather than competition for office was the focus of political activity, with Forrest as the impartial arbiter of competing claims. The secret of his success was not so much the creation of a personal faction as the ability to satisfy the demands of all regional groups. Forrest's political acumen was important here, but so also was the unprecedented prosperity of the colony, which made bold expenditure possible and undergirded the political stability of the period.

The smallness of its population and the conservative character of its society also helped to cast the politics of Western Australia in a mould which differed from that of New South Wales. Anyone who mattered knew everyone else who mattered, and until the turn of the century power remained in the hands of a coterie of old colonial families. The atmosphere in parliament itself is well illustrated by Forrest's remarks at the opening of the session of 1895: 'We are very glad indeed to meet our old friends and supporters, and even those who do not always support us. It is a pleasant time of the year when Parliament comes round, and we have an opportunity of meeting one another, and of discussing the questions of the day.'<sup>9</sup> In such an environment it was easy for Forrest to stifle controversy. Though his own inclinations were basically conservative he was very sensitive to public opinion and where necessary was prepared to forestall the opposition by introducing reforms himself. The usual pattern of events was for an opposition member to introduce a motion advocating a particular change; a long debate would follow during which radicals and conservatives alike would let off steam, and at the end one of the ministers would announce that if the motion

<sup>7</sup> See for example, WAPD, Vol 8, p 395; Vol 15, p 1540.

<sup>8</sup> *Victorian Express*, 11 May 1894.

<sup>9</sup> WAPD, Vol 8, p 3.



was withdrawn the government would consider bringing down appropriate legislation in the following year.<sup>10</sup> In this way Forrest was able to retain control of all business and at the same time create an impression of governing on behalf of all sections of the community. Forrest was also adept at weakening the opposition by taking his abler critics into the ministry—a lure which few were able to resist.

Factors like these led contemporaries to believe, with an exasperated Frederick Illingworth, that 'the Forrest Ministry will never die. They only reconstruct'.<sup>11</sup> But of course the Forrest Ministry did die. In 1901 its leader left to take up a portfolio in the first Commonwealth Cabinet, and in the next five years no less than six ministries shuffled across the political stage. Although Forrest's departure was the immediate cause of this period of instability, the winds of change had been gathering strength for some time before. Between 1897 and 1900 the mining districts were steadily drawn together in opposition to Forrest by dissatisfaction with the food duties, mining regulations, railway freight rates, and the proportion of public moneys expended in the goldfields regions. These grievances led to heightened political activity on the goldfields, and at the elections of 1897 and 1901 many of the new metropolitan and goldfields seats created by Forrest's reluctant reforms of 1896 and 1899 returned men who were new to the colony and unsympathetic to the government.<sup>12</sup> It was a sign of the times that in 1900 Forrest was compelled by pressure from the goldfields to ignore the wishes of many of his most loyal supporters and take Western Australia into the Commonwealth as an original state. The development of an organized labour movement in the 1890s was also significant. In 1899 the first Trades and Labour Congress decided upon the formation of a political Labour Party, which two years later won eight seats in the Legislative Assembly.<sup>13</sup> Forrest's personal prestige and accumulated experience enabled him to hold these new forces in check for a time, but his successors had little chance of doing so.

On Forrest's departure he handed over the leadership of his former supporters to an experienced lieutenant in George Throssell, but almost at once the group began to disintegrate.<sup>14</sup> It lost ground at the election of 1901, and within a few months had split into two factions, neither of which could form a stable government. Power thus passed to the old

<sup>10</sup> For example, WAPD, Vol 2, pp 121-30; Vol 8, pp 395-420; Vol 11, pp 49-188.

<sup>11</sup> WAPD, Vol 8, p 94.

<sup>12</sup> C. T. Stannage, 'The Composition of the Western Australian Parliament: 1890-1911', *University Studies in History*, Vol IV, No 4, 1966, pp 6-12.

<sup>13</sup> For an outline of the rise of political labour, see H. J. Gibbney, 'Working Class Organisation in Western Australia from 1880 to 1902', University of W.A. Honours thesis, 1949.

<sup>14</sup> For the details of the disintegration see B. K. Hyams, 'Western Australian Political Parties, 1901-1916', *University Studies in History and Economics*, Vol II, No 3, 1955.

oppositionist group of city and goldfields liberals led by George Leake and later Walter James, until in 1904 the state's first Labour government took office under Henry Daglish. Between 1902 and 1904 the rise of the Labour Party as a major force in parliament led many of the survivors of the old Forrest group to cross the floor of the House and join the Leake-James party, which they were to some extent able to remould in their own image. General elections in 1904 and 1905 completed the process of polarization by wiping out the remaining independents; by 1905-6 two coherent parties faced each other in the Legislative Assembly for the first time in the history of Western Australia, with the Liberal Party (as the Leake-James group had become known) in office, and the Labour Party in opposition.

The period of unstable ministries between 1900 and 1905 has more in common with the factionalism described by Loveday and Martin than any other phase in Western Australia's political development, but even here the parallel is far from close. Although there were a number of leaders competing for office by enticing new members into their following, or allying with other groups, the factions were based more on regional interests than personal loyalties. In any case, conditions were no longer suited to faction politics for the rise of the political Labour Party forced all other groups and individuals to coalesce or face political extinction. It is therefore more relevant and helpful to see this period as one of transition to party politics.

Here once again the Western Australian experience differs from Loveday and Martin's account of events in New South Wales, for their second major assertion is that the rise of the Labour Party in that colony was anticipated and facilitated by the free trade and protectionist parties which superseded the factions. In Western Australia this was not the case. Neither the ministerialists nor the oppositionists of the 1890s made any pretence of constituting a political party; indeed they would have been horrified by such an idea. Forrest, and to a lesser extent Leake, provided continuity of leadership, and 'caucus' meetings were not unknown; but on neither side was there effective discipline, unity of political belief, or extra-parliamentary organization. It is true that as early as 1889-91 a body calling itself the Liberal Association of Western Australia had 'adopted' candidates of whose policies it approved and even sponsored one or two candidates itself, but this association had no real connection with any parliamentary group, and was in any case short-lived.<sup>15</sup> The Labour Party, which was launched in 1899 and won its first seats in 1901, was thus the first organization in Western Australia worthy of being described as a political party in the modern sense. Though the political aims of the party were mild and its union

<sup>15</sup> *West Australian*, 8 and 22 Dec 1888; 20 Sept 1890.

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basis weak, by 1902 it had adopted most of the disciplinary and organizational techniques used by Labour parties in other states, and by 1904 had formed its first administration. It was undoubtedly in response to these successes, and those of the Labour Party in the federal sphere, that the parliamentary Liberal Party came into being. The National Political League of Western Australia and the National Liberal League were created outside parliament in 1904 and 1906 respectively by groups of worried businessmen, for exactly the same reasons.<sup>16</sup> The connection between these leagues and the parliamentary Liberal Party was tenuous at first, but became much closer in 1911 when a new Liberal League of Western Australia united all the existing liberal organizations in the state.

The question of free trade versus protection played no part in the evolution of political parties and was never really an issue in Western Australia. Well before responsible government was introduced, agricultural protection through duties on imported foodstuffs had become the settled policy of the colony; these food duties aroused a great deal of controversy in Perth and on the goldfields in the late 1890s, but the debate centred on the high cost of living and was seldom related to the 'theoretical' question of free trade and protection. There were no organizations in Western Australia in this period comparable with the Free Trade Association and Protectionist Union of New South Wales.

In brief, the economic and social backwardness of Western Australia at the time responsible government was introduced, together with the extraordinarily rapid development of the colony thereafter, shaped the course of Western Australian politics along lines different from those described by Loveday and Martin. Factionalism was an important part of Western Australian politics, but a faction system comparable with that of New South Wales did not develop because stable government was achieved without it. The transition to party politics, which was very rapid, was sparked off not by the fiscal issue but by the decision of the labour movement to turn to political action. Thus within the space of fifteen years after 1890 Western Australia moved from pre-faction politics to party politics; in the process she experienced some of the ingredients described by Loveday and Martin, but the mixture was very different.

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<sup>16</sup> Hyams, *op cit*, pp 53-4.



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INDEXES OF AUSTRALIAN IMPORT PRICES,  
1900 TO 1927-28

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The Commonwealth Bank (now Reserve Bank) of Australia has published an index of import prices for the period from 1928 to the present but no official import price index is available before that year. Many analysts have used as a substitute an index for the imported goods included in the Sydney Wholesale Price Index. A list of commodities and grades covered, weights used, and sources of information as to price is first given in *The Official Year Book of New South Wales* (1919). Weights are in accord with average annual consumption in New South Wales during the three years 1911-13, and the index was published with 1911 = 1000. The compilers stated explicitly that the index of wholesale prices of imported goods was not designed as an import price index since

- (i) it covered only 40 per cent of imports into the state, omitting such items as clothing, furniture, and other highly manufactured products, because of difficulties presented by fashion and quality changes; although their raw materials are included, these prices may fluctuate more rapidly than those of finished products; and
- (ii) it used price quotations—from market reports in trade journals and newspapers, and from manufacturers and merchants—which included customs duties, charges for preparation for market, and distribution costs.

Frederic Benham, in an appendix to *The Prosperity of Australia* (London 1928), says nearly all the commodities covered were either non-dutiable or subject to *ad valorem* duties whose rates had varied little since 1901, so that the fact that duties were included would not invalidate the index. He then considered the regimen of the index: practically no manufactured goods were covered. He constructed a single price index series for these (1900-26) from United Kingdom Board of Trade export price series for 'articles wholly or mainly manufactured with 1914-18 covered by the *Statist* index numbers of wholesale prices. He concluded that as these series moved fairly well together over mo

of the period, the Sydney index could be assumed to show trends 'not misleading for imports as a whole'. He also suggested that the index should be applicable to the rest of Australia, since about half the total imports went to New South Wales and the two halves were similar in composition.

Another index of the level of import prices in this period was provided by Dr Gordon Wood in his *Borrowing and Business in Australia* (Oxford 1930). His index for 1900-13 is allegedly based on data given by the Commonwealth Statistician in his first *Labour Report*. This combines import and export values, and although from weighting figures it would be possible to extract relative weights of imports and exports in each of the groups, apply this to the group indexes, and then compute a weighted total, the end result would still be affected by the export price level as contained in the group indexes.

Sir Roland (then Dr) Wilson, in his *Capital Imports and the Terms of Trade* (Melbourne 1931), says that despite many trials he was unable to discover how Dr Wood's index was compiled from the data given', though it appeared to be based on the textiles, groceries and miscellaneous group indexes, and in most years the unweighted averages of these three indexes approximated Dr Wood's figures. Wilson also dismisses Wood's index for 1914-15 to 1926-27 since although it was based on 'selected group prices and British Wholesale prices' neither the identity of these prices nor their manner of combination were revealed. In the absence of a suitable alternative, and in the light of Benham's appraisal, Wilson uses the index for imported goods covered by the Sydney Wholesale Price Index.

To help in evaluating this series as a general index to movements in the level of Australian import prices I have constructed two series of import price indexes for 1900-28, the first with constant weights and the second with changing (current year) weights. The Laspeyre (constant weight) formula gives an index of price changes only; its disadvantage is that as trade patterns change, the price changes measured will no longer refer to the trade taking place. This can be minimized by constructing series for short periods—say 5 or 10 years—though the results can be much affected by arbitrary choice of period. Linkage of series can also distort. Where there are significant differences in weighting between two consecutive series, indexes for overlapping periods are unlikely to fluctuate in unison, and where links are made at a single common period the level of an entire series can be markedly altered. In addition, where relative quantities change at the links, some element of change in the composition of trade will be added to the price changes being measured. The Laspeyre series shown here is therefore constructed with a single set of base weights.

A Paasche (current weight) index compares price changes between

base period and current period for currently traded quantities. Valid comparisons of price changes are then only possible between base and current period, and arrangement of individual index numbers as a continuous series is misleading unless it is clear that the indexes combine changes in relative quantities with changes in relative prices. This problem exists also for both Laspeyre and Paasche chain indexes, where each period is compared with the previous one successively back to the base period.

The Laspeyre and Paasche formulae thus illuminate different problems: the Laspeyre shows price changes in goods traded in the base period, while the Paasche shows how the prices of goods presently traded have changed since the base period. The Laspeyre is clearer in meaning for comparisons of prices between adjacent years, while for longish periods and a consideration of the terms of trade the Paasche index—which shows changes in the average value of trade from both price movements and changes in the composition of trade—may be more relevant. The base year is 1913, chosen because (a) it is near the centre of the span, thus giving as little as possible exaggeration between the ends; and (b) it is the year immediately preceding World War I.

Initially the indexes have been constructed on a country classification, the countries originally selected being those from which Australia imported anything upwards of about £1m. in 1913, but of these some had to be omitted because of lack of data. Belgium, France and Switzerland, for example, did not provide suitable indexes and the bulk of Australian imports from them—such as apparel—was not amenable to average value calculation from import figures. This left the United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, India, New Zealand, Germany, Netherlands East Indies, Pacific Islands and Ceylon, which together accounted for 85 per cent of imports in 1913.<sup>1</sup>

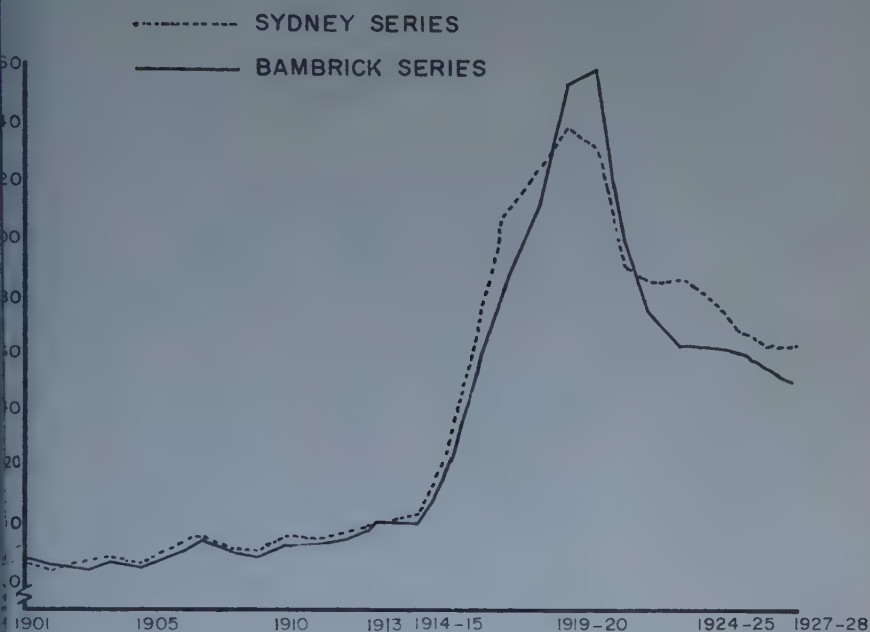
The series for each country is synthesized from series for its various exports to Australia. Those used, in order of preference, have been (i) overseas export price indexes, (ii) overseas wholesale price indexes and (iii) unit values of imports into Australia; (i) and (ii) have been

<sup>1</sup> Gold and silver, bullion, specie and in matte, and bronze specie, are excluded from import figures throughout. Personal and household effects are also excluded. Prior to 1947 all Australian import figures were published in British currency values. They represent domestic values in the exporting country—or the price paid by the importer, including discounts, if this is higher—plus (in later years of the period, at least, as specific mention appears) charges for placing goods f.o.b.; the whole then being increased by 10 per cent. This 10 per cent has nowhere in this paper been deducted since it will not affect average values themselves. Following the official overseas trade figures has meant that figures are for calendar years to 1913, and thereafter are for financial years 1 July to 30 June.



# Indexes of Australian Import Prices

## COMPARISON OF LASPEYRE INDEXES OF AUSTRALIAN IMPORT PRICES, 1901 to 1927-28



agged and are given as at date of arrival.<sup>2</sup> Weights for the synthesis of each set of group indexes to a country index are values of Australian imports in each group from that country; weights for the combination of country indexes to aggregate indexes are values of Australian imports from the countries concerned. These Australian trade figures are drawn from annual *Oversea Trade Bulletins*. Country and aggregate indexes are shown in Table A.

Table B gives indexes constructed for commodity groupings. The classifications used were initially imposed by the arrangement of available price index series for Australia's imports from her major supplier, the United Kingdom, modified where necessary by the classification of series for other countries. For 1900-13 the United States was the only additional index source (the two countries together supplying about two-thirds of Australian imports in 1913) and combination of the two allows only three groups—the first for food, drink and tobacco, and the others

For the early period of construction of the Commonwealth Bank's index the necessary lag varied from perhaps three weeks for New Zealand, through six weeks for the United Kingdom and North America, to about three months for some continental ports. These lags were considered by shipping contacts to have been applicable to the period from 1900.

Table A  
AUSTRALIAN IMPORT PRICE INDEXES, AGGREGATE AND BY COUNTRY, 1900 TO 1927-28  
(1913 = 100)

	United Kingdom		United States		Canada	India	New Zealand	Germany	Ceylon	Pac. Is.	N.E.I.	Total	
	L*	P*	L	P	L	P	L**	P				L	P
1900	87	94	91	94	103	97	—	78	—	—	—	90	90
1901	83	90	86	92	97	96	—	82	84	—	—	87	88
1902	80	86	86	90	96	92	—	85	79	—	—	85	85
1903	80	86	88	87	100	96	—	71	76	—	—	84	84
1904	83	87	85	92	96	95	74	78	78	—	—	86	86
1905	82	87	89	97	97	94	58	61	82	—	—	85	86
1906	86	92	95	101	98	99	58	61	79	—	—	89	91
1907	90	96	99	106	104	108	69	75	83	—	—	94	97
1908	87	92	89	95	111	102	80	77	92	—	—	90	91
1909	85	89	93	99	114	114	72	83	92	94	81	89	89
1910	88	93	99	103	111	113	69	73	94	101	85	92	93
1911	89	95	89	96	104	107	82	86	100	99	86	93	94
1912	90	96	94	99	99	102	65	75	101	100	101	95	95
1913	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1914-15	104		90	90	99	102	90	95	104	94	114	100	100
1915-16	132		109	114	97	102	101	106	122	91	127	125	124
1916-17	172		136	142	103	112	103	106	123	94	173	159	156
1917-18	204		159	168	118	137	125	131	112	106	141	188	177
1918-19	226		167	171	131	148	249	271	122	105	176	213	201
1919-20	274	248	191	188	154	173	291	302	182	92	310	255	228
1920-21	296	313	170	169	155	176	195	214	115	137	337	261	265
1921-22	224	251	130	131	131	144	145	152	163	131	194	199	213
1922-23	188	199	131	129	124	123	174	179	187	178	139	175	175
1923-24	175	170	130	130	120	118	151	155	221	109	172	164	157
1924-25	169	160	130	127	118	114	223	231	239	182	137	164	152
1925-26	165	173	131	127	115	120	236	241	237	108	178	162	161
1926-27	158	169	125	123	114	122	223	233	224	157	171	155	155

# Indexes of Australian Import Prices

Sources of basic price or average value indexes used in computing country indexes:

- (a) United Kingdom: For 1900-13 indexes for seven product groupings were calculated from data in Great Britain: Cd. 7432, (1914) LXXXIX; for 1914-15 to 1918-19 they were Board of Trade Wholesale Price Indexes; and from then on were used series for over seventy different commodity groups, mostly calculated from export value data in Board of Trade Journals, with supplementary information from Australia's *Oversea Trade Bulletins*.
- (b) United States: Indexes are for ten groups, and were computed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Later years are covered in the Bureau's Bulletin no. 473, early years in *Historical Statistics of the United States*, published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.
- (c) Canada: Indexes for seven groups come from K. W. Taylor and H. Michell's *Statistical Contributions to Canadian Economic History* and from *Prices and Price Indexes, 1914-1934* (Dominion Bureau of Statistics).
- (d) India, Ceylon, Pacific Is. and N.E.I. (Netherlands East Indies) are calculated from Australian trade data.
- (e) New Zealand series, for up to sixteen groups, are based on figures in *N.Z. Year Books* for 1914 and 1921-2 to 1929.
- (f) German series for nine groups were supplied by Statistisches Bundesamt, Wiesbaden.

Notes: \*L = Laspeyre (constant — 1913 — weights)  
P = Paasche (current weights)

\*\*Laspeyre indexes could not be calculated as indexes for major items were not available; Paasche indexes were used in further calculations.

Table B (I)

PRICE INDEXES FOR AUSTRALIAN IMPORTS IN VARIOUS CLASSES, 1900 TO 1913  
(1913 = 100)

	Food, beverages and tobacco		Raw materials and semi-manufactures		Finished Manufactures		Sources:
	L*	P*	L	P	L	P	
1900	101	99	99	102	89	89	Indexes are based on the U.K. source mentioned earlier and on N.B.E.R. data appearing in <i>Historical Statistics</i> .  Notes: *L = Laspeyre (constant — 1913 — weights). P = Paasche (current weights).
1901	97	96	88	90	87	87	
1902	92	93	82	82	84	84	
1903	92	93	81	81	84	84	
1904	91	91	80	79	86	86	
1905	98	96	80	79	86	86	
1906	98	97	85	84	91	91	
1907	96	95	94	93	95	95	
1908	96	96	88	88	91	91	
1909	98	98	80	80	89	89	
1910	100	99	85	85	91	91	
1911	102	101	86	86	93	93	
1912	105	104	92	92	95	95	
1913	100	100	100	100	100	100	



Table B (II)

PRICE INDEXES FOR AUSTRALIAN IMPORTS IN VARIOUS CLASSES, 1919-20 TO 1927-28

(1913 = 100)

	Food, drink and tobacco		Fibres, apparel and textiles		Minerals, metals and products		Wood and wood products		Chemicals, oils, fertilisers, etc.		Rubber and manu- factures		Leather and manu- factures		Earthen- ware, glass, etc.	
	L*	P*	L	P	L	P	L	P	L	P	**	L	P	L	P	**
1919-20	232	221	344	343	204	190	266	259	201	216	208	242	254	261		
1920-21	195	179	332	330	233	217	290	291	267	283	209	173	158	296		
1921-22	169	176	236	242	206	201	203	213	211	228	197	127	111	270		
1922-23	168	187	202	209	167	160	159	167	177	188	158	131	126	201		
1923-24	161	195	192	196	152	141	163	159	168	176	129	124	113	175		
1924-25	184	230	205	205	142	137	138	153	177	172	131	128	115	153	164	
1925-26	181	208	206	207	138	136	150	148	153	160	143	130	116	147	160	
1926-27	176	192	189	190	136	131	144	145	153	148	148	123	114	149	162	
1927-28	182	193	181	178	131	130	138	136	133	122	127	136	133	147	157	

Sources: Basic sources were as for country indexes, with the addition of average value series—calculated from Australian trade figures—for France, China, Japan, Norway and Sweden.

Notes: L = Laspeyre (constant 1913 weights). P = Paasche (current weights).

\*\* only Paasche indexes possible in some or all years.

### *Indexes of Australian Import Prices*

for all remaining commodities classified by stage of processing. For 1914-18, only aggregate indexes are available for imports from the United Kingdom and this precludes the construction of any meaningful breakdowns for imports as a whole. For 1919-20 to 1927-28 seventy series for imports from the United Kingdom have been combined, with values of Australian imports of each group from the United Kingdom providing the weights, to yield indexes for eight commodity groups covering items at all stages of processing. With similar series from thirteen other suppliers (see footnote to Table B II), and values of Australian imports in each group from each country acting as weights, these give the final group series shown in Table B II. Aggregate indexes synthesized from the commodity data of Tables B I and B II virtually coincided with the series given in Table A and have therefore not been given.

The relationship of the aggregate Paasche and Laspeyre indexes in Table A is not constant; theoretically, differences may be accounted for by the nature of sources of price changes. Where these on balance result from increases in world demand and Australian demand also rises, then a Paasche index may be expected to rise faster than a Laspeyre. If in a period of price rise the causal factor has been on balance a fall in supply, then the Laspeyre index may be expected to rise faster than the Paasche. Although the Laspeyre and Paasche indexes just constructed are not strictly comparable, they do show similar direction of movement except in 1925-26, when opposite movement reflects mainly the United Kingdom position. This disagreement should be borne in mind when either series is used for even general conclusions.

It remains then to compare the Laspeyre index just described with the Sydney imported goods index. The two series are plotted in the chart on page 65. The most notable difference is that the peak in my series occurs in 1920-21, while the Sydney series reaches its high point in the previous year. This is almost certainly accounted for by the arbitrary method I was forced to adopt in calculating Australian fiscal year values for United Kingdom indexes in these immediate post-war years, and I would assume that the Sydney series dates the peak correctly. Divergences in movement (as in the period 1922-3 to 1925-6) and differences in absolute levels must remain unexplained until the working sheets for the Sydney Wholesale Price Index, at present unavailable, can be located.

*Australian National University*

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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Peter Burroughs, *Britain and Australia 1831-1855: A Study in Imperial Relations and Crown Lands Administration* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1967), pp vi + 419: \$13.10

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A simpler title for this book would have been 'Britain's Land Policy in Australia' between the named dates. It examines the subject from the initiation of the Ripon Regulations to 'the surrender of imperial control', consequent upon the grant of colonial self-government. Throughout, Dr Burroughs is concerned primarily to ask why the imperial government acted as it did from time to time. This entails a study of pressures both from within Britain and rebounding back from the colonies.

Dominant among British pressures was the influence of E. G. Wakefield; that phrase would have made an appropriate sub-title. Or perhaps 'the failure of E. G. Wakefield' would have been still better, for Burroughs tells how, by and large, the colonists hated Wakefield-tinctured policies and took control of their land with the cry of that hate in their mouths.

The book has great merit: it is the best account of its subject. By hard digging in Roberts' *Squatting Age* and *Land Settlement*, Melbourne's *Constitutional Development*, Pike's *Paradise*, Madgwick's *Immigration*, Hartwell's *Van Diemen's Land*, and Buckley's articles, one could get most of the basic facts here adduced. But that would be arduous work, and Burroughs gives a rich bonus of attendant data and argument. One of his most notable achievements is to find fresh data and clues in documents which historians have already worked hard.

Burroughs benefits in the ways from being a non-Australian and working at the imperial centre. First, he treats the history of *all* the Australian colonies and so offers a comparative study, such as is rare in our historiography. Especially concerning Western Australia, the material is novel and enlightening. Second, Burroughs is sensitive to the appeal of Wakefieldianism for the governing class. It gave a dignity to colonization and provided a rationale for the authorities' use of colonial land as a source of revenue wherewith to finance imperial policies, above all immigration. The fusion of land and immigration policies, central for Wakefield, is one of the strongest features of this study. The account of the Land and Emigration Commission comes especially to mind. Burroughs has enough sympathy for Wakefield to remind us that the free migration he encouraged was, humanly speaking



of general benefit. Wakefield was right enough in warning against the growth, early in a colony's history, of a class which dominated land ownership; South Australia, for all its teething troubles, did avoid that fate in sizeable degree, so that to T. F. Elliot it appeared in 1850 'one of the most perfectly constituted Societies which we have in any new Colony'. This sympathy does not distort Burrough's final judgment: he sees that Wakefield often and vainly opposed reality and common sense, and that the administrators used Wakefield as much as vice versa.

While Burroughs is imperial-centred and benefits from being so, yet he uses Australian-based studies and in so doing gives *Britain and Australia* further historiographical virtue. This book and Shaw's *Convicts and the Colonies* have much in common. Both are imperial history, but of a radically different type from that which saw Australian history as significant only in terms of the imperial context. Burroughs grasps that the colonies had their own dynamic and that this finally over-rode the imperial concern. Could anyone in his position have done so before, say, 1950? More than nationalist conceit justifies the answer 'No'. Thus we have reached a position in which imperial and 'colonial' histories can fuse in the pursuit of integral truth.

Having said this, one must go on to say that Burroughs' weighing of Australian studies is not exactly true. He belabours Roberts for faults which most of us have accepted as facts of life. He does not appear fully to appreciate Perry's distinction of frontier types in New South Wales of the 1820s, nor Ruth Knight's discussion of the land problem in terms of colonial finances. Too often colonial opinion appears as monolithic; the one exception is when (following Buckley) Burroughs distinguishes between groups who supported the agitation against Gipps in 1844, and even here he exaggerates the unanimity of that agitation.

Burroughs sometimes harps on a theme, and compounds the fault by using much the same words to express it from time to time: for example, that most of Tasmania's good land was alienated by 1831, and that the boom of the late 1830s was almost as exceptional as, and therefore exaggerated the apparent depth of, the subsequent depression in New South Wales. He should abstain forever from the phrase 'in actual fact'. Otherwise style and presentation match the scholarship of this work and honour the Clarendon imprint.

University of Tasmania

MICHAEL ROE

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Susan Priestley, *Warracknabeal A Wimmera Centenary*  
(Melbourne, Jacaranda Press, 1967), pp 121: \$4.00

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Although shorter, less ambitious and less impressive than her *Echuca*, Susan Priestley's *Warracknabeal* still compares very favourably with the usual commissioned local history. Impressionistic, rather than a full and potentially tedious account, and district more than urban history, this book can claim a broader relevance than its title suggests. The main concern throughout is with the development of the rural area and industries on which the town depended, and the treatment of the wheat industry, in particular, is excellent. As in any good local history, material, which might in the hands of some authors remain simply local trivia, is presented in a manner which is meaningful in the broader context and should be of interest to the economic historian with a penchant for people in history.

The first and better half of the book presents a short but surprisingly detailed account, in the Kiddle tradition, of pioneer grazing in the area and its gradual replacement, from the 1870s, by wheat-farming. The need for a central market town was gradually met after the town-site was surveyed, in 1869, around a traditional Australian urban nucleus—a public house. In the 1880s a railway confirmed and enhanced the town's status as an important outlet for the Victorian mallee country. The subsequent fortunes were closely related to conditions in the wheat industry and the social and economic integration of town and country life is demonstrated. The harsh and monotonous reality of Australian agricultural life, at least before 1950, is revealed and the temptation to romanticize has been resisted. The illustrations provide an interesting and significant contribution.

Given the present underdeveloped state of urban and regional historiography in Australia, together with the fact that this is a locally commissioned publication, it would be unfair to criticize Miss Priestley for contenting herself with an approach which does not differ radically from the better type of amateur effort in this field. Nevertheless, one would have welcomed some attempt to exploit the rapidly growing array of urban and regional methods.

Unfortunately, the book is seriously deficient in maps, statistics and documentation. The entire work, which includes many direct quotations contains only sixteen footnotes and of these twelve are explanatory and might have been included in the text. The brief 'Note on Sources' is inadequate and fails to relate the material presented to particular sources. These deficiencies make an assessment of the research undertaken very difficult. Some defects in arrangement and in historical sequence become particularly noticeable in the latter part of the book.

which, by comparison with the earlier chapters, appears hurried and crammed. Despite these criticisms, this work is a refreshing and significant contribution to the traditional school of Australian local history.

Australian National University

SEAN GLYNN

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Ross Duncan, *The Northern Territory Pastoral Industry 1863-1910* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1967), pp xv + 190: \$6.50

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This administrative and economic history has been adapted from a monograph written in 1956 which scholars have long felt to be worthy of a wider audience. Professor Duncan has improved the argument here and there and added a few (not always felicitous) light touches, but researchers will still find the 1956 version worth consulting because it is more detailed and slightly more comprehensive. A notable omission from the published version is any discussion of South Australia's efforts to encourage the breeding of horses for the Indian Remount Service.

Since Professor Duncan has been forced to rely heavily on admittedly unreliable official sources for his broad survey, anyone who makes an intensive regional study will have no difficulty in pointing to errors of detail, though he will no doubt conclude, with the present reviewer, who has made a study of the history of the Alice Springs district, that the general outlines of the survey are substantially accurate. Furthermore, he will no doubt want to quarrel with some of Professor Duncan's broad, interpretive generalizations, notably with his assertion that 'the Territory was . . . a big man's country virtually from the start'. Professor Duncan wholly ignores the rise after 1894 of the small pastoralist or claypan squatter in the Centre (and elsewhere in the Territory?) who succeeded, where large capitalists had failed, by adapting his morals and economy to the exigencies of his environment.

Professor Duncan is in good company when he expresses the view that 'the story of the Northern Territory pastoral industry is . . . a story of failure', but it seems a little incongruous that anyone who stresses the obstacles to settlement as he does—if anything the harshness and isolation of the environment are exaggerated, perhaps from a desire to explode 'the northern myth'—should be far more impressed by failure than by the achievements actually won. A probable consequence of his obsession with failure is that he sometimes concentrates on explaining what did not, rather than what did, happen. Thus he is more interested in explaining why South Australian pastoral penetrations of the Territory in the seventies was 'insignificant' than in explaining why it was as extensive as it was. More frequently he writes as though he conceives



it to be the chief task of the historian to read his ancestors a lecture on what they should or should not have done. Thus chapter 1 is largely devoted to arguing that South Australia should not have annexed the Territory. Some of the arguments South Australia advanced in pressing her claim, it is maintained, were 'of very doubtful validity', others 'of doubtful honesty': 'rashly, carelessly, ignorantly, even deceitfully, South Australia encumbered herself with a vast tropical dependency.' Little attempt is made to explain why the South Australians concerned thought they were acting otherwise. The result is that Professor Duncan finds South Australia's eagerness to annex the Territory 'puzzling', some of the arguments she submitted to the Colonial Office 'most curious', and her developmental plan 'astonishing'. Nothing is astonishing once it is explained, but Professor Duncan is less interested in explanation than in pointing, from his superior vantage point, to the mistakes men made. The present-mindedness of the book is its least satisfactory aspect.

But this sort of writing is largely confined to chapter 1. All in all *The Northern Territory Pastoral Industry* is an outstanding pioneering effort and by far the best published piece of writing on any aspect of Territory history. The chief task to be faced now is that of writing a general history of the Territory, and particularly a social history which will deal at length with the question of Aboriginal-White relations.

University of Sydney

M. C. HARTWIG

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Ian Turner, *Sydney's Burning* (London, Heinemann, 1967), pp xi + 254: \$6.75

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This book is about the trial and imprisonment during World War I of twelve 'Wobblies', or members of the Industrial Workers of the World; and the long struggle for their release. The IWW played a significant part in anti-war and anti-conscription campaigns until it was legally suppressed in 1917.

In March 1916, the secretary of the Sydney Local, Tom Barker, was fined one hundred pounds for publishing a cartoon 'likely to prejudice recruiting' (not, as stated on the dust jacket, 'anti-conscription posters'). He refused to pay, and in May was gaoled for twelve months. In June and July a series of fires occurred in Sydney, with damage estimated at over £300,000. Barker was released in August, his sentence having been reduced, for reasons not clear, by the Governor-General. The first conscription referendum was announced. Further incendiarism took place. Various other crimes around this time, including murder and forgery, were linked by the police with IWW members.

### Book Reviews

In September, the IWW headquarters in Sussex Street were raided. Twelve men, only two of whom were native Australians, were charged with treason, later modified to seditious conspiracy. Seven were sentenced to fifteen years' hard labour, the rest to ten or five years. On appeal, two of the fifteen year sentences were reduced to ten years.

This is the setting of Dr Turner's book, most of which is concerned with the release campaign that followed, in which Henry Boote, editor of the *Worker*, the AWU journal, and Ernest Judd of the Socialist Labor Party played a leading part. In August 1918 the Holman Government agreed to an enquiry by Mr Justice Street into allegations of police misconduct. Street exonerated the police in his report. In 1919 Holman himself went so far as to publish articles in the Sydney *Sunday Times*, attacking Boote's case for the prisoners; and had these republished as a pamphlet. The New South Wales Labor Government returned at the 1920 elections appointed, with some reluctance, a Royal Commissioner, Mr Justice Ewing of Tasmania, who recommended the release of ten of the twelve. This took place in August 1920; by November 1921 all twelve were free.

It seems likely that the twelve were framed, though Dr Turner agrees that a few 'were involved in incendiarism, or at least in preparation for incendiarism' (p 196). The evidence presented was certainly thin. It makes a fascinating story, but the author has not quite succeeded in writing an easy-flowing, readable book. Somehow, in the attempt to record the events 'as they would have become known to a contemporary observer' (p xi), he has not given enough signposts to the retrospective reader. One reader at least found the book disjointed, and the story in places distinctly hard to follow.

University of Sydney

R. N. SPANN

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William Woodruff, *Impact of Western Man: A Study of Europe's Role in the World Economy 1750-1960* (London, Macmillan, 1966), pp xvii + 375: \$8.75

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Professor Woodruff's book deals with world economic history during the past two centuries from the standpoint of European influence. Between his Prologue and Epilogue, the global drama is set out on the familiar stage settings of international economic history—imperialism, the migration of people and capital, technological diffusion, transport and trade. Few will dispute the importance of Professor Woodruff's subject, or doubt the force and universality of western influence. Whether the author has done justice to his subject is another question.

Unhappily, in attempting to cover too much, the study uncovers too

little of the complexity of Europe's impact. We are told when and where the movements of European migrants and capital were directed that in providing capital 'the influence of certain European countries has been most pronounced' in the industrializing of Latin America; that in Angola and the Belgian Congo 'extensive provisions for agricultural research were made'; that France has 'poured men and money into north-west Africa; and so on. But no comparison is made between the political, social, or narrowly economic impact of the different colonial powers, nor are the experiences of territories within one colonial empire contrasted. Thus the often-raised question of the Catholic Spanish and Portuguese heritage as a retarding factor in Latin American development is not mentioned. No distinction is made between the influence of, say, British policy on areas with significant numbers of settlers and those without (Kenya and Uganda would provide good examples).

But even at the level of generality adopted by Professor Woodruff there are some strange omissions. The present world population explosion is ignored, despite the impact of western medical techniques. The incalculable influence of European-nurtured socialist thought with all its implications for present-day China, Cuba, and other parts of the world, also fails to find a place. Indeed, Leopold II of Belgium is given more space than Marx and Lenin together. Economic growth receives scant attention, although this is deliberate. 'There is nothing fundamentally new about economic growth (or decline) except the present obsession with it,' writes Professor Woodruff. The study is, in consequence, robbed of what should have been a major theme. The discussions of investment and foreign trade, for example, do not raise questions of the creation of 'dual economies', mono-crop export sectors or long-run changes in terms of trade. Even the organization of chapters with foreign trade considered last, misrepresents the actual historical growth process in which the opportunities for trade opened up by western industrialization encouraged the international migration of productive factors.

Professor Woodruff has no thesis—unless it is that Europe has been influential throughout the world for a couple of hundred years. The analysis used in discussing the considerable quantity of information is often superficial, and there are numerous slips in fact and judgment. The author finds it remarkable that 'articles produced under such diverse conditions as those prevailing in Europe, America, Asia, and Africa brought approximately the same prices in Europe' (p 268). During the past century and a half British imports 'expanded relatively to exports because of the steady improvement of the terms on which Britain did business with other nations' (p 290). Russian exports of wheat increased after 1913 (p 269). When demonstrating the 'imme-



### Book Reviews

iate and dramatic fall in carrying charges' brought by railways, comparison is made with the cost per ton mile by road carriage rather than with the often more appropriate water transportation (p 225). The number of immigrants to Australia fell in the 1890s 'as European conditions improved' (p 85); no mention of the Australian depression is made. The decline in British investment in Canada in 1857 is explained without reference to the international crisis (p 121).

Some misleading tables are included on pp 284-5 showing the changing geographical distribution of British and French imports for selected years. The years chosen for the nineteenth century are 1864 (1863 for France) and 1880, and no mention is made of the U.S. Civil War. The reader is left to puzzle at the change from India, France, and Egypt as the leading sources of British imports in 1864 to United States leadership in 1880. Footnotes are largely dispensed with, and there is no documentation even for a contentious statement such as 'the available data suggests that large-scale immigration was partly responsible for the fact that real wages rose relatively less in the United States in the period 1860-1913 than in Germany, France, Sweden, or the United Kingdom' (p 67).

However, the book has real merits. It brings together a vast amount of information, and includes some useful statistical tables. It attempts a world-wide view of modern historical experience, and as such is a courageous piece of writing. But this is also a weakness. The impact of Professor Woodruff would have been greater had he limited and refined the scope of his study, and developed some such theme as the influence of Europe on international economic growth.

Monash University

M. E. FALKUS

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Werner Sombart, *Luxury and Capitalism* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1967), pp xxix + 200: \$6.50 U.S.

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Sombart's powerful essay, now published for the first time in English translation, has as its basic theme the relationship between the development of capitalism and the rise of luxury at the end of the middle ages. His argument is as follows. The rise of the great ecclesiastical and secular courts is a feature of the close of the medieval period. The papal courts at Avignon and later at Rome, the court of Alfonso at Naples, the French court of Francis I set the fashion for luxury expenditure that became such a marked feature of court life up to the end of the eighteenth century. Simultaneously, the 'capital wealth' created by the expansion of trade, initially in Italy but later in the other leading

countries of Europe, made the increase in luxury expenditure possible. The transfer of this new wealth to the court is explained by the emergence of a 'new society' which arose partly from the venality of titles and partly from the intermarriage between members of the new financial class and of the established landed nobility. This 'new society' has other and even more important characteristics. Its rise explains the growth of the capital cities since the luxury expenditure of the courts gave employment to all sorts of craftsmen, artists, labourers and servants, a factor which was stressed in the eighteenth century by authors such as Cantillon and Mercier. The other important feature of the 'new society' is its association with the gradual secularization of love. Sombart knows 'of no event of greater importance for the formation of medieval and modern society than the transformation in the relations between the sexes which occurred during the Middle Ages and through the eighteenth century. In particular, comprehension of the genesis of modern capitalism is closely bound up with a correct appreciation of the basic changes in this most important domain of human activity.' Illicit and sensual love replaced the sanctioned and institutionalized love of the early middle ages, so that beautiful and lovable women became an essential part of court life. The sexual emancipation 'begins with timid attempts; this is followed by an epoch of strong natural sensuality in which a free, naive love life reaches its full climax. Then follows a certain refinement, then debauchery, finally, perversion.' The courtesan and the mistress, elevated by this process, become the catalysts in luxury expenditure; they demand and receive 'presents' which become more extravagant as the wealth of the court increases. Luxury is therefore the child of the great courts, and especially of the whims of its ladies which are fed by the new wealth. Capitalism, on the other hand, is the child of luxury. Sombart argues that this second proposition was already well established in the economic literature of the eighteenth century. Mandeville and Defoe in England, Pinto and Melon in France, Schröder in Germany, all praised the necessity of luxury for the creation of the wealth and industry of the nation. This attitude is summed up in Voltaire's remark: 'Le superflu chose très nécessaire.' Furthermore, an inspection of the development of industry and trade in the period shows how strongly this was influenced by the demand of the state, or, in other words, the court. All the leading industries, either directly or indirectly, obtained their demand for their products from this source, and these industries were generally organized on a capitalist basis. As Sombart concludes: 'Luxury then, itself a legitimate child of illicit love, . . . gave birth to capitalism.'

Sombart's thesis breaks down on two important points. In the first place, if luxury is such an important factor in the development of capitalism, he fails to explain why China and India failed to generate

a capitalist system of production since both these countries had highly advanced luxury industries at early stages of their development. Secondly, one may ask why the two countries which were least influenced by the luxury expenditure described by Sombart nevertheless become the greatest capitalist countries of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In England and North America the driving force behind capitalist development did not lie in the luxury demand of a small privileged section of the community whose mode of life was based on the splendour of a court; on the contrary, it found its origin in the much larger demand of the middle classes for more ordinary articles of consumption which the new techniques of large-scale production were placing within their reach. It can almost be said that Sombart's thesis carries the seeds of its own destruction. It partly explains why production on a capitalist basis first developed in countries with a sophisticated demand for luxury goods, where industry could flower, even on a relatively large scale, under the stimulus of a limited demand from a court circle. The limits on this demand also explain why the growth of this form of capitalism necessarily had to cease, and why capitalist production transferred its seat to England and later to America where it was geared to relative mass consumption. Sombart's thesis proves almost the opposite of what it sets out to prove. It demonstrates the historical necessity of the fact that England rather than France fathered the industrial revolution and the emergence of modern capitalism. This does not mean that Sombart's essay is no longer worth studying. It is, partly because it contains many fundamental insights and partly because it is a good example of the old economic history with its extravagant generalizations and its loose assertions. Sombart's *Luxury and Capitalism* is a minor classic in the literature of economic history, and for this reason we can be grateful that we now have the opportunity to study this work in English and that we can profit from the insights and even the mistakes of an important historian.

University of Sydney

P. D. GROENEWEGEN

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Arnold J. Toynbee, *Acquaintances* (London, Oxford University Press, 1967), pp viii + 312: 35s. stg

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Now aged seventy-eight, Arnold J. Toynbee (the 'J' to distinguish him from 'Industrial Revolution' Toynbee, his uncle) has spent his life among the high intellectual aristocracy of England; or at any rate that section of it concerned with scholarship, politics and the study of society. No doubt he numbers eminent scientists among his friends, but none are pictured here. Among English men and women, including



some of non-English origin whose fame was English, he writes of Margoliath, the Arabic scholar; Alfred Zimmern; the Tawneys; the Hammonds; the Webbs; Lionel Curtis. These, and some others like T. E. Lawrence and Smuts, have been much written about, and this means that the effect is a little thin. Because their lives impinged on many fields of English thought and action, the reminiscences of politicians, academics and administrators are almost bound to mention some of them, and there is a large volume of floating verbal legends about them. Writing generally from long personal acquaintance, Dr Toynbee confirms, and adds some detail, to the impression one already has of people like the Tawneys and the Webbs, but his book will yield little that is new, or at least new in an important way, to their future biographers. To me the freshest portrait is that of Sir Lewis Namier. To those who never met Namier, the reference by one who had been a fellow-undergraduate to 'the smile of the lovable Lewis' does happily modify a somewhat pontifical stereotype.

Outside his English friendships, Dr Toynbee's wide acquaintance with Europe and his long professional concern with international affairs provide some interesting brief portraits of less familiar scholars and politicians caught up in the post-1919 tangles of European life. His account of academic society in Bonn on the eve of the Nazi revolution was to me vivid and frightening, since it happens that, as a tourist-undergraduate, I met some of them in July 1932 and had some of their excited debate interpreted to me during a long evening. One of them, the lady then a university lecturer who later married the Professor of English, is described as a New Zealander. She was an Australian. They were talking that evening about Hitler, whom Dr Toynbee met in 1936. He gives a creepy account of a monologue of two and a half hours from a Hitler deliberately on his best behaviour, with a voice 'agreeably human in its pitch and cadence—human that is, when he was not talking about Russia'.

This is not a notable book of reminiscences, but it is agreeable and urbane. Some critics have attacked Dr Toynbee as a kind of self-appointed prophet, but there is no trace of self-centredness in his affectionate and appreciative sketches of his friends and their work.

*Australian National University*

*J. A. LA NAUZE*

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G. L. S. Shackle, *The Years of High Theory, Invention and Tradition in Economic Thought 1926-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp viii + 328: 45s. stg  
 C. H. Feinstein (editor), *Socialism, Capitalism and Economic Growth, Essays Presented to Maurice Dobb* (Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp x + 367: 45s. stg

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What Professor Shackle means by 'High Theory' is most easily explained by enumeration. This book discusses the works written between 1926 and 1939 on imperfect and monopolistic competition (notably by Joan Robinson and Chamberlin); on demand and the indifference curve (Hicks and Allen); on monetary equilibrium (Myrdal); on money, interest and employment (Keynes); on cycles and growth (Harrod); and on input-output (Leontief).

Professor Shackle makes little or no distinction between these contributions to 'High Theory' in respect of their content, the empirical testing of their conclusions, or the significant predictions they yield. As regards the claims or criteria which 'High Theory' must satisfy, Professor Shackle mentions first 'imaginative splendour lifting thought above itself' as that 'by which all theory ultimately stands or falls' (p 1). At one point (p 287) Professor Shackle briefly observes that 'a type of thought scheme which offers the possibility of prediction, explanation and technology is a theory'. But this hint is as near as we get to the specification of criteria or content, and it is not developed with reference to any of the particular theories reviewed.

As regards Mrs Robinson's 'new value theory' of imperfect competition, Professor Shackle concludes that this 'turned from mechanism into taxonomy' (p 54). Presumably taxonomy qualifies as 'High Theory'. (Incidentally, Professor Joan Robinson is said now to regard this early achievement of hers in 'High Theory' with some distaste.) Anyhow, Professor Shackle does not examine whether or how the theory of imperfect competition has at all significantly advanced understanding and prediction with regard to problems of monopoly and restrictive practices (as Marshall's very un-high theorizing in *Industry and Trade* undoubtedly did).

Next comes the theory of demand as elaborated in the notable article of Hicks and Allen (1934). It is not made clear just what 'the theory of demand' consists of beyond simply the *concept* of the indifference curve, which is described as 'one of those remarkable notational inventions that can nearly think for itself' (p 88). On a merely historical point, to imply (p 87) that Hicks' and Allen's article was the first treatment of the indifference curve in English since Edgeworth, is to overlook Irving Fisher, W. E. Johnson, and A. L. Bowley.

Professor Shackle rightly expresses a very high regard for Myrdal's work on monetary equilibrium, though his admiration is based very largely on Myrdal's emphasis on uncertainty and his distinction between ex-ante and ex-post. Professor Shackle claims that 'Myrdal anticipated the *General Theory* in almost every respect except that of its huge impact on economics and the world' (p 144).

Keynes's *General Theory* is, in fact, the one work in this period of 'High Theory' of which Professor Shackle has any serious criticisms. Almost its only virtues seem to be its emphasis on uncertainty and expectations and its liquidity preference theory of interest. Asking whether the *General Theory* was 'necessary or worthwhile' (p 162), or was 'a backward, and an unnecessary step' (p 182), Professor Shackle concludes that it was justified 'if only to make possible its distillation into the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* article of February 1937, 'the apotheosis of his thought' (p 135). This is a very interesting view of the *General Theory* which might, however, be maintained on the entirely different grounds of its questionable contribution to a consensus regarding policy-making against unemployment and to the operational techniques thereof.

Professor Shackle has given us an interesting and rather elegantly written book from which much can be learnt about an important phase in the history of economic thought. But the criteria or lack of criteria in his conception of 'High Theory' could be said to reflect a central weakness of academic economics at that time and since.

Very few English economists have ever been honoured by a *Festschrift*; the only other recipient I can recall being that scholarly and abrasive upholder of some of the more dangerous classical fallacies, Edwin Cannan. Dr Maurice Dobb is certainly in many important respects worthy of this compliment. In a much too brief introductory note Professor Hobsbawm rightly emphasizes Dr Dobb's priority as the doyen of Cambridge communist dons and his great influence in the Marxist boom of the early thirties when Dobb's own College, Trinity, alone produced such a remarkable crop of dedicated and renowned communists. This very interesting volume suggests the atmosphere of an old-boys' reunion of the economic ultra-left in which the dogmas and fanaticisms, the 'unmaskings' and heresy-hunts of yesteryear are genially forgotten, and at which above all, no skeletons are to be rattled. Once or twice, however, a distant rattling may be detectable. Dr Prager of Vienna, in a penetrating paper on the political compulsions to economic growth, tactlessly refers to 'the grievous damage wrought to the cause of socialism by the crimes and follies of the Stalin era' (p 211) (crime not only of course, against a cause, but against millions of individual people, left loyally and meticulously uncriticized throughout the decade of their duration by some of the contributors to this volume and b



Dr Dobb himself). Then, again, in an outburst by Dr A. A. Konüs of GOSPLAN, Professor Joan Robinson is denounced for her assertion that no point of substance in Marx's argument depends upon the labour theory of value' (p 73). Professor Robinson's own contribution after referring to 'the present revolt' in the communist countries, makes (in a Marxist context) the rather novel if pathetic appeal that 'under socialism, surely, the consumer's interest should be defended' (p 188).

In fact, the main impression left by this very interesting symposium of current Marxist-socialistic economic thinking—which is what this volume substantially amounts to—is the immense variety of conflicting and outright contradictory current viewpoints, and that all the old dogmas and certainties are now deep in the melting-pot disintegrating before the economic forces of today. This is certainly a much healthier state of affairs than that of the decades of doctrinal rigidity, with the ludicrous obeisances to Stalin as an important economic thinker, indulged in, for example, by Dr Paul Sweezy and others of the contributors to, and editors of, this volume. But of course this change has come about very much in spite of, rather than because of, the intellectual efforts of Dr Dobb and many of those here paying tribute to him.

It is obviously impossible to review here, or even to refer to, all the twenty-six contributions to this wide-ranging collection. It is no more than an indication of personal taste and qualifications if, in addition to those already mentioned, we call attention to the paradoxical model of R. M. Goodwin 'standing Ricardo (and Marx) on his head' (p 58), to the accounts of current Czechoslovak problems by Kyn, Sekerka and Hejl, and to the distinguished essays by Ota Sik, K. W. Rothschild and E. H. Carr.

Australian National University

T. W. HUTCHISON

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Joan Thirsk, editor, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Volume IV: 1500-1640* (Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp xi + 919: £7 stg

R. Trow-Smith, *Life from the Land: The Growth of Farming in Western Europe* (London, Longmans, Green, 1967), pp 238: \$5.30

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Most of the major multi-volume studies which have been designed to cover a particular area of history have been conceived as works of synthesis. Their purpose has been to draw together the fruits of research which lay scattered in specialist periodicals and to build up from these fragments a general picture for the less or sometimes more informed lay reader. Often they were most welcome, as a source in which the

approach to the study currently found most illuminating by scholars could conveniently be found by students. The final impression they left, however, was frequently disappointing: true, they provided a valuable guide to the area of recovered knowledge, but they utterly failed to point to the areas which could most fruitfully be next approached, or to suggest new methods of approach, new insights into the subject. The synthesis provided not a springboard to further study but more often a straitjacket which impeded any attempt to move beyond the boundaries laid down in the study.

The group of scholars who, nine years ago, formed a committee to promote the creation of an agrarian history of England and Wales had, however, something rather different in mind. A study of English agrarian history on this scale had never been attempted before, and the sort of regional and parochial studies which then existed rarely followed the lines of approach which they hoped to pursue. Many crucial areas of study had been almost completely neglected. Most British work, for example, completely ignored the importance which rural industries might have for the economic structure and way of life of an agrarian region. It was clear that the work would have to be primarily one of research not one of synthesis. In this respect at least, the present volume, which is the first of the planned eight volumes to appear, more than fulfils the expectations raised by the project.

Mrs Thirsk's opening chapter on the farming regions of England admirably sets the standard for the volume. The danger with such a subject is that it will degenerate into a wearisome catalogue of virtually meaningless descriptive minutiae, but Mrs Thirsk has handled it so adroitly that the wider patterns of the influence of environment on man and man on environment stand out beneath the mass of detail. There may be local historians anxious to fault the picture in some of its details but its general validity and importance cannot be doubted.

Perhaps the most exciting chapters, breaking as they do almost entirely new ground, are those by Alan Everitt on the farm labourer and on the marketing of agricultural produce. Here again, the emphasis is on regional diversity and specialization. By the time Dr Everitt has finished no reader will again be able to think of the farm labourer as an indistinguishable member of an amorphous mass of people who all lived in identical conditions and possessed interchangeable skills. Nor will he be able to envisage the countryside as a place largely devoted to subsistence farming where markets and marketing techniques were essentially crude and imperfect.

Not all the chapters live up to these high standards. Dr Batho's chapter on the Crown as a landlord is particularly disappointing. In so short a section he could not, of course, be expected to investigate all the peculiarities of the Crown's position, but unfortunately, except for

some piecemeal raids on original documents, he has depended almost entirely on one rather old-fashioned source. Even in his later section on noblemen, gentlemen and yeomen landowners he fails to achieve a really fresh approach. What one wants to know surely, from the viewpoint of agrarian history, is not how successful landlords were at rack-renting their tenants, but something about the more difficult though crucial question of what effect their attitude and behaviour had on the way in which the land was exploited. Rack-renting, after all, rarely leads to good agricultural practice; achieving the right balance between landlord and tenant to promote long-term agricultural development was a complex and delicate business.

Dr Bowden's chapter on agricultural prices, farm profits and rents is rather more mixed. Much of the statistical material is invaluable and his general discussion of the material is interesting and often most illuminating. But surely, in the light of all the evidence for regional diversity gathered in his own and other chapters, he should have refused to pursue that will-o-the-wisp, a modern balance sheet for some hypothetical 'typical' farms? Certainly he employs more sophisticated techniques than most of his predecessors, but this does not mean they are more appropriate—perhaps the reverse. Dr Bowden criticizes the tables that Professor Alan Simpson printed in his *Wealth of the Gentry* on the grounds that they represent 'not, in fact, profits at all, but some form of gross return'. But these tables are directly based on the records kept by the people concerned and on which they presumably based decisions about their future course of action. As such they are surely more significant than the fictional profits estimated in money terms of Dr Bowden's notional farmer? The historian's prime interest is surely to establish what criteria contemporaries did employ, and why. Dr Bowden's estimates might perhaps be interesting if he could establish that farmers would have achieved a more realistic assessment of their position had they kept books in such a form—but can he? Were there reasonably available alternative uses to which the capital and labour involved could have been put at the rate of interest which he uses? Given the seasonal fluctuations in prices would a sixteenth century farmer have gained anything other than an ulcer from estimating value at historic cost? Even in the twentieth century the accountancy problems of the farmer were such that special provisions were made in the tax acts. Can Dr Bowden ignore them in this way?

This is one of the most valuable books to appear for a long time, and one can only conclude by hoping that the rest of the series match this initial volume in quality and are not too long delayed.

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Interest in the history of farming has shifted in recent years towards a very much closer concern with the technical problems of production



and a greatly heightened appreciation of the variety imposed and created by natural conditions beyond the control of man. A short introduction to this approach which does not assume considerable familiarity with the techniques of farming has been lacking, however, doubtless because the task demands of the author, if he is to be successful, an enormous range of knowledge together with a gift for clear expression. Mr Trow-Smith possesses this regrettably rare combination and has produced an invaluable short text. He has solved the problem of the sheer unmanageability of the widely different conditions obtaining in different parts of Europe by using a single country—England—as a continuous unifying thread, while he compares, contrasts and supplements the individual story with a wide variety of continental material.

Mr Trow-Smith is at home with the many disciplines which are today required of the farmer and the farming historian—such subjects as biology and plant mutation, geology and soil structure and chemistry—and he leads the unfamiliar reader to an elementary appreciation of the many factors involved in successful farming and ‘improvement’. He does not minimize the significance of the mistakes even successful improvers made. He achieves that difficult feat, a proper balance between the history of arable farming and that of livestock husbandry, and a due appreciation of the links and interactions between the two.

Mr Trow-Smith places perhaps less emphasis on purely economic factors than one has come to expect, but he would probably argue, with a good deal of right on his side, that, particularly in pre-industrial society, farming reacts imperfectly, if at all, to what are today considered normal economic considerations.

Perhaps a more serious criticism is that Mr Trow-Smith pays less attention than the subject merits to the effects on the agricultural side of the tenurial and social structure of the area. Nineteenth-century England provides a very clear example of the way in which the spread of good farming practice and the investment of capital in the land can be held up in some areas or on some estates by such external factors as the legal limitations imposed on the holder of property by the requirements of such things as the strict entail, or, at the tenurial level, by the vexed question of compensation to tenants for improvements made on the farm during the period of their tenure. This, however, is a very minor blemish on an otherwise excellent book.

*University of Sydney*

*S. M. JACK*

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P. G. M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit 1688-1756* (London, Macmillan, 1967), pp xix + 580: \$14.00

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The financial needs of the government played a central role in the development of organized money and capital markets in Britain before 1750. During the 1690s three important innovations—the foundation of the Bank of England (1694); the introduction of the exchequer bill (1696) which subsequently replaced tallies as a means of short-term borrowing; and the beginnings of the permanent national debt (1693)—revolutionized the English financial system while at the same time providing the basis for a system of public borrowing that was to see England triumphantly through more than half a century of almost continuous warfare.

It is with the origins of this system of public borrowing that Mr Dickson's important and authoritative study is concerned. Apart from an introductory section in which the problem to be studied is outlined, the rest of the book is concerned with considering in turn: the development of a system of long-term government borrowing, the sources of the capital invested in government long-term securities, government short-term borrowing, and the growth of a market in securities in London in the period after 1688.

Central to an understanding of the financial changes of these years is the emergence of a system of long-term government borrowing in which the South Sea Company played a key role. In a masterly account of its operations Mr Dickson rightly insists that the more sensational features of the company's history should not blind us to the fact that, by taking up the greater part of the large outstanding government short-term debt, the South Sea Company permanently changed the structure of the English public debt.

A study of the sources of the domestic capital invested in English long-term government loans at this time shows, among other things, that it came mostly from London and its environs, and that while investment by individuals predominated, by the middle of the eighteenth century there were substantial institutional investments. Foreign investment in the English public debt showed a steady increase in size throughout the period, with Dutch ownership increasing at the expense of other countries, particularly Switzerland. However, despite the new material presented, Dickson's study does little to illuminate the question of the significance for the Dutch and English economies of this international movement of capital, while the Carter-Wilson debate on the measurement of Dutch foreign investment is completely ignored. For the reviewer the chapter on foreign investment was the most disappointing feature of an otherwise wholly admirable study.

The weaknesses of government short-term borrowing during these years were alleviated partly by the increased proportion of government expenditure covered by long-term loans and partly, after 1725-6, by the increasing reliance placed on exchequer bills circulated by the Bank of England and paid off annually from incoming taxes. In this new situation the Bank of England further contributed to the stability of public borrowing by itself becoming the chief holder of exchequer bills. In the case of the long-term securities, of course, the Stock Exchange, by providing a market for their purchase and sale, increased the willingness of savers to invest in them. At the same time the growth of the government's long-term debt by providing an increased supply of securities made possible the further development of stockbroking during the eighteenth century.

The growth of public borrowing, by financing the capture of empire and stimulating the growth of an internal capital market, contributed indirectly to fostering the industrial revolution in Britain. With the exception of an excellent chapter on the movement of the rate of interest, Mr Dickson has not attempted to pursue this relationship in depth. Indeed this would be expecting too much of him. His study as it stands is a major contribution to our understanding of the economic conditions preceding the onset of the industrial revolution in Britain.

*University of Queensland*

A. G. KENWOOD

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A. W. Silver, *Manchester Men and Indian Cotton 1847-1872* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1966), pp xi + 349: \$8.75

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This is yet another major American contribution to the field of modern Indian history. In his study of Manchester's commercial relations with India and of its attempt, through pressure group tactics, to influence Indian administration, Mr Silver not only integrates a great deal of previous fragmented research, but concentrates his attention on the important and much neglected period of the 1860s.

He shows that as Manchester became increasingly aware of the dangers of relying too heavily on American supplies of raw cotton it focused greater attention on India as an alternative source of supply. The various Manchester groups, determined to obtain more and better quality Indian cotton, pressed for increased government activity—improved communications and port facilities, greater encouragement of European colonization and even reforms in the revenue and judicial administration. Together with Utilitarians, missionaries and others they became an important group attempting to change conditions and, to some extent, re-fashion Indian society. Their intermittent and somewhat



clumsy attempts to influence Indian administration were not always successful. They were confused and disunited and, especially after the defeat of John Bright in 1857, lacked influential parliamentary spokesmen. They had no adequate representatives in India (unlike the Evangelicals) and sometimes, because of sheer ignorance of current developments in India, their claims were easily refuted.

One of the highlights of Silver's book is his analysis of Manchester's conflict with Sir Charles Wood, Secretary of State for India, 1859-66. He shows that the dispute arose partly because Manchester's persistent demand for an expanded programme of public works conflicted with Wood's determination to balance the Indian budget and that the conflict involved an important question of principle. Wood believed in a policy of *laissez-faire*, but the Manchester merchants, so long exponents of the same idea and yet desperately anxious for further government intervention, were finally compelled to argue that the principle could not be applied to the Indian situation.

Although Silver devotes considerable space to this discussion of Manchester's relations with Sir Charles Wood, his treatment is by no means exhaustive, and he overlooks at least one important consideration. Wood opposed Manchester's proposals partly because he suspected they were interested in Indian cotton mainly as a temporary expedient and that, as soon as supplies from America improved, the demand for Indian cotton would suddenly drop. Hence, there was danger of wasting government money on unnecessary projects and of stimulating over-production.

In spite of its high standard of scholarship and many obvious qualities Silver's book is a little disappointing. He might have made greater use of existing material, thought more about the implications of his own research and tried to relate his conclusions to broader issues. For example, he does not really explain the relationship between Manchester's agitation and Radical attitudes towards India. He argues that in the late 1860s Manchester was no longer merely concerned with the cotton question, but had broadened its horizons and demanded a more vigorous agricultural policy. Does this development of broader objectives reflect an increasing humanitarian and Radical influence? He has no satisfactory explanation. What was the relationship between the Radicals in parliament and the Manchester merchants? Did the Manchester groups support the predominantly Radical Indian Reform Society founded in 1853? Of course Silver had to limit his field, but had he paid a little more attention to these wider issues his book may have been an even more impressive contribution. As it is, it stands as a model of careful analysis and research, and should remain an indispensable reference for all those interested in the British connection with India in the mid-nineteenth century.

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R. Roysten Pike, editor, *Human Documents of the Industrial Revolution* (London, Allan & Unwin, 1966), pp 368: 25s. stg

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This selection of extracts, drawn largely from Parliamentary Paper documents the industrial crucifixion of generations of women and children. In doing so it provides a useful service to students and teachers who should all know something of the documentary evidence about these things. But whether one should accept the editor's claim that this is history unfiltered through the minds and pens of historians and is, therefore, 'the rich red meat of human experience', is another matter.

None of the extracts in the section, 'The Rise of the Factory System' which describe the industrial system and the state of society before the 'Industrial Revolution' are by contemporaries. All were written between seventy and one hundred years after the events they describe. Furthermore, in this section and elsewhere, the view of pre-industrial England which gets the greatest airing is that of Gaskell, Cobbett and the Tory Radicals. Pre-industrial England is presented as a rural arcadia. Yet for this period the 'rich red meat of human experience' comes to me more clearly through contemporary songs like 'The Colliers Wedding', through reports in newspapers, poor law records, reports of quarter sessions and even distilled in the writings of historians like Dorothy George and arcadia is not in them.

A further unsatisfactory feature of this selection is that it relies too heavily on the evidence of factory operatives and colliers given before middle class commissioners serving those who had axes to grind. As a result the human voices which get through most forcibly are those of a beaten and broken people, and of a middle class desperately concerned about the threat to society of the sexual immorality of the industrial population. A better balance would have been given to the selection through the inclusion of the experiences and reactions of working men and women as recorded in local newspapers, friendly society and trade union records, letters, the occasional memoir, broadsheets, posters, pamphlets and song. Similarly the impression made on the reader about the nature and consequences of industrialization might well be different if something in the record showed that in 1841 sixty per cent of the workforce was employed outside the manufacturing and mining sectors. As it stands this selection is but a short step in the direction of supplying documentary material to help the non-specialist towards a judgment about the human consequences of industrialization in Britain.

University of New England

R. S. NEALE

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Tom Burns and S. B. Saul, editors, *Social Theory and Economic Change* (London, Tavistock, 1967), pp vii + 104: \$4.25

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This short book consists of four papers taken from the first International Seminar in Social Sciences held at the University of Edinburgh in March 1965, which had as its main topic the consideration of contributions from the social sciences to the causal analysis of social and economic change and in particular the use by the economic historian of explanation derived from sociology and psychology. The longest, most substantial and most thought-provoking paper is by E. E. Hagen who discusses some exciting concepts in relation to social change; his masterly treatment of the industrial revolution and the British personality in itself would make the book a worthwhile acquisition.

Reinhard Bendix considers the relevance of certain sociological and socio-psychological concepts in the interpretation and understanding of historical change. A highly readable contribution by M. W. Flinn is notable for its introduction of the psychological notion of an achievement motive into the derivation of the causes of economic growth. Flinn does this lucidly and well although unavoidably the theme has its weaknesses because the degree of significance to be accorded to the achievement motive itself really needs to be considered more thoroughly in its own context of psychological research and personality theory.

The paper by Michael Argyle, a social psychologist, presents an interesting hors-d'oeuvre of some of the findings of psychological research, mainly of laboratory studies. Argyle excels in the coverage of a range of findings and his discussion of achievement motivation fits in appropriately with Flinn's paper. But one cannot help feeling that much of the current research on actual situations of industrial change has been left out and this results in a somewhat stereotyped and single-track treatment of, for example, 'resistance to change'. On the whole, the book has a variety of attractions, not least of which is that for many readers it will break into fresh ground and suggest novel lines of thought.

*Udinders University*

J. K. CHADWICK-JONES



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Margaret Miller, *The Economic Development of Russia 1905-1914 with Special Reference to Trade, Industry, and Finance* (London, Frank Cass, 2nd edition, 1967), pp xxx + 321: 65s. stg

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Dr Miller's study of the Russian economy between 1905 and 1914 was first published in 1926. It is now reprinted verbatim, with a new introduction, a Supplementary Select Bibliography, and a Select Bibliography which is borrowed from her *Rise of the Russian Consumer* (I.E.A. 1965). The Index is still listed in the Contents as commencing on p 309 although it now commences on p 319.

Academic fashions change, and this work now appears very dated. Above all, economic history written in 1967 is analytical and mathematical. By contrast the present book is statistical in the old-fashioned sense of including a large number of figures. One is relieved that the author does not translate everything into percentages and index numbers; however, mathematically expert students may be dissatisfied that no challenge is thrown down to their powers of comprehension. Unfortunately, the statistical material is presented as separate items, which often are left quite unrelated to one another. The National Income or the Gross National Product of Russia are nowhere mentioned whereas there are a score of references to the National Debt. Dr Miller could not have written, forty years ago, with today's technical apparatus. But her book, which even then was not strong in general interpretation and integration, now seems in these respects especially weak.

Earlier, the book's abundant factual material and wide array of sources contributed to its usefulness, although a reviewer complained that the source materials had 'not entered largely into the text'; one also notes the awkward distribution of appendices at five separate places. Much of this material is still useful. However, if it is now reproduced—as seems to have been intended—to enable comparison with the present day, it might have been taken into account that units of measurement, names of cities, the very geography of Russia, have changed in the interval. Nizhni-Novgorod is now Gorky, and so on; the verst has long since been discarded for the kilometre. Readers will need to be, or become, familiar with a now outdated terminology.

The introductory Geographical Survey is a useful feature, too often omitted in more recent surveys of the Soviet economy. A new ten-page Introduction has been added. The author hardly succeeds in bridging the gulf between 1926 and 1967; in fact, her remarks are compressed to a degree that sometimes startlingly telescopes causation (such as the historical *coup d'oeil* which brings the overthrow of the Tartar yoke which took place in 1480—into one paragraph with Russia's economy).

life just before the Great War), or impairs literal accuracy. For example, on p xxiv the disbandment of Machine Tractor Stations is mentioned as one of the reforms undertaken between 1953 and 1958, and for 'a few years these measures brought about an upsurge of production'. In fact, the Machine Tractor Stations were disbanded *in* 1958.

Dr Miller writes that the present rulers' 'more favourable attitudes to private initiative recalls the important growth of individual land-holding in the period 1905-1914. . . . It would seem that after long years of the subjection of private initiative in farming to state-controlled production on collective and state farms, Russia may again be moving towards the idea of a "mixed" system' (pp xxv-xxvi). A certain parallel can be drawn between the collective farm and the mir (the ancient village community), and the switch of attention in recent years from industry to agriculture somewhat resembles the change of emphasis, after Witte's downfall, from industry and railway-building at all costs to agriculture. A detailed comparison of the two situations would be of interest. The present book does not, however, enable such a comparison, owing to its scanty treatment of the Stolypin reforms which are mentioned only in one footnote (p 16). Indeed, the lapse of time has underlined the lack of balance in the structure of the book, which hardly mentions agriculture yet devotes 42 pages to foreign trade.

Dr Miller emphasizes parallels between the present period and that about which she wrote (e.g. pp 308 and 314). She is quite right that students of Soviet affairs, including of the Soviet economy, are paying how much greater heed to the continuity of Russian development, and her book provides some useful material in support of this desirable trend. But her strong emphasis on the resemblance of 1905-14 to . . . when exactly? Fixing the modern equivalent to 1914 has alarming implications) seems overdone. There are indeed similarities, and there are differences.

The reprinting of Dr Miller's book will be welcomed by libraries which are seeking to build up their stock on Russian and Soviet materials. It must only be seriously regretted that the opportunity was not grasped to produce a modernized and more aptly balanced text.

*Australian National University*

RAYMOND HUTCHINGS

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- J. ADLER, *Claus Spreckels: The Sugar King in Hawaii* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1966), pp xii + 339  
 [Claus Spreckels, a German who migrated to the United States at 18, was a successful pioneering businessman. On the Pacific Coast he captured a virtual monopoly of the sugar industry and his empire extended from California to Hawaii, where he acquired enormous power in the eighteen-eighties. Adler thinks of him in many ways a rascal, but an important one, whose influence on the development of Hawaii has been underestimated.]
- J. L. ALDERSON, *A Handbook for Archivists* (Havelock, The Clinalder Press, 1967), pp 34: 50c
- L. C. BRIDGLAND, *Aspects of Tariff Policy and Procedures* (Melbourne, a CEDA project published by F. W. Cheshire, 1967), pp xxviii + 92: \$3.50
- RONDO CAMERON (with the collaboration of Olga Crisp, Hugh T. Patrick, and Richard Tilly), *Banking in the Early Stages of Industrialization: A Study in Comparative Economic History* (Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1967), pp xv + 349: \$7.25  
 [To be reviewed]
- M. CANNON, *The Land Boomers* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1967), pp ix + 247: \$2.45 paperbound  
 [Mr Cannon's excellent account of the Melbourne land boom of the 1880s, first published in 1966, and now available in a paperbound edition, can be recommended without qualification as an exciting yet academically sound piece of historical writing. The book has already prompted a valuable review article by A. E. Beever and R. D. Freeman ('Directors of Disaster?', *Economic Record* Vol 43, No 101, March 1967).]
- D. DILLARD, *Economic Development of the North Atlantic Community: Historical Introduction to Modern Economics* (New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp vii + 747: \$10.95  
 [To be reviewed]
- D. GILCHRIST (editor), *The Growth of the Seaport Cities, 1790-1825* (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1967), pp xvi + 227: \$5.00 U.S.  
 [This volume of the proceedings of a conference sponsored by the Eleutheria Mills-Hagley Foundation in March 1966 contains six main papers with comment and discussion on each paper. Julius Rubin's paper on 'Urban Growth and Regional Development' challenges the pervasive hypothesis of American historiography of social and economic conflict between the agricultural frontier and the eastern seaboard cities, and emphasizes the common economic and cultural bond of city and country. This interesting point is not, however, developed. Other papers—on population, foreign trade, manufactures, financial institutions and economic thought—contain interesting material but do not collectively provide a coherent or comprehensive account of the subject of the conference, nor of the role of the cities in American economic growth in this period.]
- R. HOROWITZ, *The Political Economy of South Africa* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967), pp 522: \$9.80
- F. KELLAWAY, *A Whaler* (Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1967), Early Australian Series, pp 32: 55c
- J. E. LANDER, *International Economic History* (London, Macdonald & Evans Ltd, 1967), pp xii + 298: 15s. stg
- D. S. MACMILLAN, *Scotland and Australia: 1788-1850 Emigration, Commerce and Investment* (Oxford University Press, 1967), pp xviii + 434: \$11.60  
 [To be reviewed]
- K. MUNDEN (editor), *Archives and the Public Interest: Selected Essays by Ern.*



## Publications Received

- Posner (Washington D.C., Public Affairs Press, 1967), pp 204: \$6.00  
 [To be reviewed]  
 R. POYNTER, *Russell Grimwade* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1967), pp xiv + 321: \$8.35  
 [To be reviewed]  
 L. ROBSON, *A Convict* (Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1967), Early Australians Series, pp 32: 55c  
 T. SUTCLIFFE, *A History of Trade Unionism in Australia* (Melbourne, Macmillan, 1967), pp 282: \$2.50  
 TILLY, *Financial Institutions and Industrialization in the Rhineland, 1815-1870* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), pp viii + 197: \$6.50 U.S.  
 USSEL WARD, *Australia* (Sydney, Ure Smith, 1967), pp x + 195: \$3.95  
 [This reprint of the book first published in 1965, and reviewed in *Business Archives and History* (Vol 6, No 2, August 1966), contains numerous photographs and some useful diagrams and maps, and is very attractively printed. The text is unchanged except for minor corrections.]  
 L. WHEELWRIGHT and J. MISKELLY, *Anatomy of Australian Manufacturing Industry* (Sydney, Law Book Co., 1967), pp xvii + 433: \$13.00  
 [This book is an extension of Wheelwright's *Ownership and Control of Australian Companies* (1957), and is based on more complete information available as a result of the passing of the Uniform Companies Act in 1961. Although the book contains a mass of statistical material on 299 companies—it is basically a reference book—the broad conclusions are hardly surprising. As in 1953 and in most advanced capitalist countries, Australian industry is tightly controlled and highly concentrated. The value of the book lies in the attempt to quantify this control—both local and overseas.]

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K. D. S. JONES: The New Zealand Economy, 1966-67

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